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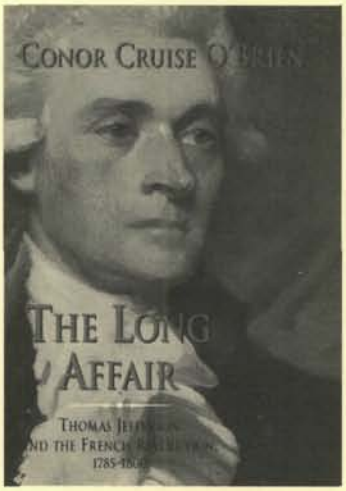

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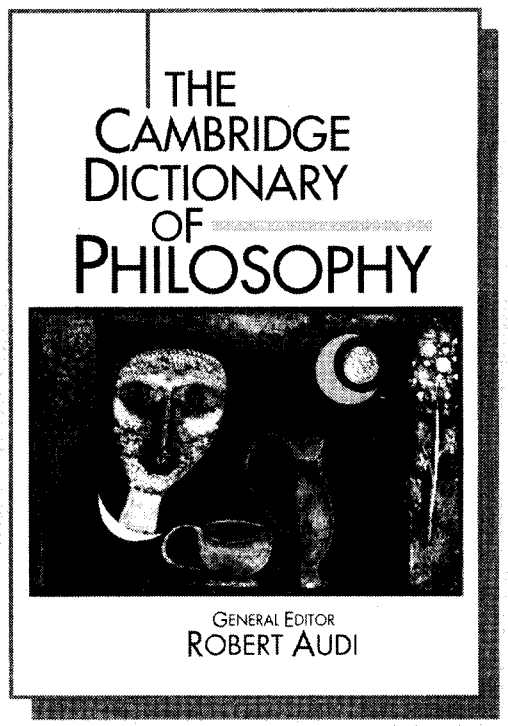

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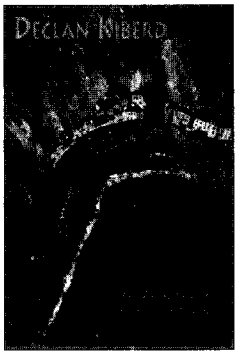

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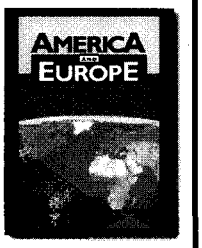

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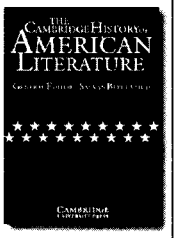

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Will You Still Feed Me?

ARISTIDES

Will you still need me,
Will you still feed me,
When I'm sixty-four.
—Lennon and McCartney

I know it's no great achievement—I realize people are doing it every day—but I am rather smugly pleased to have reached the stately age of sixty. I am pleased because, while the actuarial tables suggest I ought to have made it, nonetheless I have "the imagination for disaster," in the phrase of Henry James, who claimed to have "seen life indeed as ferocious and sinister." I am always not so secretly delighted when the worst doesn't happen. James also called death, at his final illness, "the Distinguished Thing." The Distinguished Thing has not come knocking at my door, at least not yet, though it regularly pays check-out calls on people my age and much younger: Harold Ross at fifty-nine, Whitaker Chambers at sixty, and François Truffaut at fifty-two were required to pack their bags.

The few friends to whom I have mentioned that I am sixty seem mildly impressed. I am a little impressed by it myself. My birthdays have until now not much moved me. I have always felt my age, and I have tried to act my age, too, which, in a society that vaunts youthfulness, hasn't always been easy. I used to see my official retirement date—2002, when I shall be sixty-five—on documents and viewed the number as more properly belonging to the realm of science fiction. I read the other day that Chicago, the city in which I live, hopes to have the Olympics in 2008, and I wonder if I shall be around to attend them.

As I clicked off the decades in my own life, I made note of what they were supposed to represent: thirty—the end of young manhood; forty—the onset of true earnestness; fifty—midlife, the halfway point (though, chronologically, not really), the age that evokes all sorts of empty symbolism. But sixty, sixty I think is fairly serious. There is nothing ambiguous about being sixty, the way there is about being in one's fifties. If one takes to chasing young women in one's sixties, for example, one is, officially, a dirty old man. At sixty it is even too late to undergo that greatest of all masculine psychological clichés, a midlife crisis. If one does so, one is not in a crisis but is merely being a damn fool.

In a Mavis Gallant story called "An Unmarried Man's Summer," the hero is told by his father, "If your life isn't exactly the way you want it to be by the time you are forty-five, not much point in continuing." He adds, "You might as well hang yourself." I suspect that the advice—apart from the hanging—is sound if the age, in accord with the longer-gevity of our own day, were set at sixty. At sixty, one probably does well not to expect wild changes, at least not for the better. Probably best not even to expect a lot in the way of self-improvement. Not a good idea, I think, at this point to attempt to build the body beautiful. Be happy—immensely happy, in fact—with the body still functional.

At sixty I am now too old to die young, which is, somehow, pleasing. I am too old to expect a dramatic shift, apart from illness, in my life: too old to turn gay, or go motorcycle or

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Hasidic. The cards have been dealt, I have taken my draw, and I must play out the game. I happen to think I drew a pretty good hand. (A joker or two, I realize, is still to come.) Had I my first six decades to live over, there are lots of things I might have done differently. Yet I realize that had I done them differently, I might not have been able to do most of the things that I am now glad to have done. If you are satisfied with your life and its few accomplishments—and I, for the most part, am—even serious mistakes made early in life come to seem not only sensible but necessary. If you are not pleased with your life, of course, the reverse applies, and everything seems both a mistake and unnecessary.

Can you bear much more of this smugness? I'm not sure that I can. One of the nice things about *Hamlet*, it has been said, is that at least Polonius, who may himself have been around sixty, gets stabbed. To become Polonius-like, to start dispensing vast quantities of advice, is one of the temptations of growing older. When with young people, I find I already have to guard against playing the kindly old gentleman. I have sworn off all sentences that begin, "You may not remember this, but . . . " or, "When I was a kid . . . " or, "During World War II, I remember . . . " or, "In my day. . . ." At sixty, one begins to feel one is entitled to such sentences—and one is, of course, wrong. Better, I think, to save them until age ninety-six or ninety-seven.

Sixty can have this strange effect on people, rather as if one is suddenly driving in a different gear. The most radical case of a sudden shift at sixty I know about belonged to W. H. Auden, an odd enough man in his own way before sixty but very odd indeed after sixty. It was as if at sixty precisely Auden was able to live as the old man he had earlier longed to be. He had carried carpet slippers around with him before, but now he began wearing them full-time and in all sorts of weather. He rarely changed his clothes. He would tell the same anecdotes over and over, often to the same people and within a brief span of time. "At my age," he averred, "I'm allowed to seem a little dotty."

After sixty, Auden emphasized all the little crankinesses that had earlier added to his charm but now chiefly irritated his friends. He became tyrannical about other people being punctual. He insisted on early bedtimes, and would leave other people's dinner parties at nine, or chase people from his own apartment at the same time. He liked to say that he had given up sex. (He hadn't.) He allowed himself mildly right-wing views, which he repeated to the point where they became set pieces. He became a monologist. He ceased to exercise. ("A *walk*? What on earth *for*?") Friends said that he had lost all spontaneity and that he longed for death. By sixty-two he seemed, in the words of one of these friends, Margaret Gardiner, "a very old man." Sixty, for W. H. Auden, was clearly a serious mistake.

If turning oneself into a mangy old coot at sixty is a grievous error, what are the other possibilities? Philip Larkin, on his sixtieth birthday, wrote that he looked "forward to the decent obscurity of autumn." With his excellent deadpan, he wrote to a friend that he thought it "a bit hard to call someone sixty just because they've been fifty-nine for a year." Yet he felt "being sixty is rather grim," adding, with just the right measure of Larkinesque rue, "I can't say I *feel* unduly old; I'm bald and deaf and with a Falstaffian paunch, but these have been with me for several, if not many, years. A chap in the *Guardian* said that the best thing about being sixty is that it isn't being seventy, and while this is true it's something that time will cure, as Pitt said when accused of being too young."

Auden said seventy was a good age to die, though he thought he would live to eighty-three; in fact, he pegged out, in 1973, at age sixty-six. Larkin, who was always conscious of passing time and of the time left to him, departed the planet at sixty-three. "Who am I now?" Auden wrote, in a poem called "Prologue at Sixty":

> An American? No, a New Yorker,
> who opens his *Times* at the obit page,
>
> whose dream images date him already,
> awake among lasers, electric brains,
> do-it-yourself sex manuals,
> bugged phones, sophisticated
> weapon-systems and sick jokes.

I am myself a Chicagoan who also opens his *Times* at the obit page. No news more interesting than that having to do with those who have left the court. It seems, at this point, as if someone I know, or someone connected to

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someone I know, dies nearly every other day. I consider a fine morning one on which the *New York Times* prints obituaries about five people—four who died in their early nineties and one who died at eighty-nine. A bad morning is one on which three of the deceased are younger than I and two are just a few years older. This means that the machine gunner is out and firing indiscriminately. It would be a great help if one knew the exact date of one's own death—one's own true, so to say, deadline—though I am sure that, even with years of warning, one would still manage to be unprepared. I have always regarded the phrase "untimely death" as the poorest possible usage; hard to imagine, for oneself, a timely one.

Meanwhile, small warnings keep cropping up. I note what look like a few mottles, or age spots, on the top of my left hand. Graying of hair, rotting of teeth, loosening of flesh—all seem nicely on schedule. ("What is life," said Carlyle, "but a continual dying!") My handwriting, never very good, begins to approach the indecipherable. An eleven-year-old girl, with the utter candor of kids, one night at dinner said to me, "You don't have an upper lip." When I checked in the mirror, this turned out to be quite correct. I am getting a mortgage banker's mouth: two thin lines with teeth in between. Standing before the mirror, I practice the sentences, " You should have thought of that earlier. I'm sorry, but we are going to have to foreclose on the farm."

In the press, I see photographs of people—chunky men with ringed pates of white hair, women in what appears to me an advanced state of decrepitude—and, *sacrebleu!*, they turn out to be four years younger than I. People even much younger hold jobs I assumed would always be held by people much older than I. Our poet laureate was the student of a contemporary of mine; the current Secretary of State once worked for my wife.

I see photographs in the press of people a year or two older than I, and I tell myself that surely I don't look anywhere near as old as that. Yet when I last went to the movies, I gave the young woman selling tickets a twenty, and, as I counted my change, I noted that she had charged me the senior-citizen rate. I put down a book on the counter at my Korean dry cleaner's, and the owner asked me if the photograph on the back is of me. It is, in fact, a photograph of Isaiah Berlin, who is a mere eighty-eight.

I am thought to have a good memory. What I have, in fact, is a writer's memory. For mysterious (and extraordinarily lucky) reasons, I seem to be able to call up all sorts of odd facts and memories required by things I happen to be writing. But when not writing prose, I have become quite as forgetful as other people my age. Names drop away, titles of books and movies frequently aren't there when I need them, odd bits of information get lost: the other day, for example, I could not recall the word *spleen*; a few days earlier, I mislocated the name *Borsolino*, the Italian hatter. I seem especially bad at keeping past time straight. Events that I recall as being five or six years past turn out to be eight or as many as ten years past. I remember scarcely anything of trivial movies that I have seen as recently as three or four years ago. It is rather charming, really, allowing me to come to these ephemeral entertainments as if afresh.

Please do not get me wrong. The ongoing struggle, as the Communists used to say, keeps on going. A significant decision about growing older, it seems to me, has to do with whether or not one wishes to keep roughly abreast of new technologies, computers chief among them. I think that, had I been ten years older, I might have taken a pass on the computer age, contenting myself with using the computer only for its word processing. But I decided to hang in there. I haven't my own Web page, but I am, in a limited way, a World Wide Webster, partial, like nearly everyone else who uses it, to E-mail and unable to read anything of any length on the Internet. I am even a disappointed and now lapsed subscriber to *Wired*, a magazine that suggests the promise of computer technology bringing about a new sensibility. After reading *Wired* for more than a year, I have decided to stay with my old one.

Hanging in there, I continue to read young novelists and short stories writers: Cathleen Schine, Nicholson Baker, Mark Leyner, Julie Hecht, David Foster Wallace. I read these writers partly because much of my education has been through fiction, partly because I still love the novel and short story above all other literary forms, and partly because I hope they will tell me things I do not know about the way we live now. I find I do learn some of these things, though I am not sure I am getting a

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healthy return on my investment. But, then, I may have reached the age when nothing seems quite new and everything begins to remind me of everything else. I may be coming to a time when only amusing children and acts of inexplicable goodness are capable of blowing me away.

A certain distaste for change has begun to set in, even—perhaps especially—in minor matters. I find I do not wish to contemplate the notion that there is now a football team called the St. Louis Rams. The Rams have been in Los Angeles for as long as I can remember, and they ought to have had the decency to stay there—at least for my lifetime. When a house or building is razed along one of my habitual routes of travel, I feel a touch of loss, as I would after losing a back tooth that I hadn't hitherto been conscious of. A good deal of what passes for elegant food in modish restaurants seems to me overly ambitious, and I long for plain good food. Not all my positions and emotions are rearguard. I find, with the help of Pierre Boulez, that I am coming to enjoy modern musical composition, though only when I am in the room where it is being played. But I am most content when in familiar surroundings and among old friends.

I pick up a literary quarterly to discover that there is an interview with Alice Fulton by Alec Marsh. I don't know who Alec Marsh is. I don't know who Alice Fulton is either, or why she is worthy of being interviewed. Turns out she's a poet, has written a book with the amusing title *Sensual Math*, and seems to be interested in the issue of "the poet's relationship to our electronically mediated world." By me, as the poker players say, as they toss in their cards. I used to know the names of all the poets. Also those of all published short-story writers, novelists, critics, reviewers, key publishing editors. I knew the mastheads of all the magazines, including those in exceedingly small print in *Time* and *Newsweek*. Now—by me.

My interests seem more limited generally. Am I, subconsciously, delimiting them? The list of things I no longer know about—and, perhaps more significant, no longer care to know about—grows. I know the names of fewer and fewer movie stars, United States senators, major-league pitchers. I am not interested in politics—either its nuts and bolts or its larger structures. I can on occasion be shocked, but I am less and less surprised. I recently read an entire book on prostate cancer.

Just as my interests seem more limited, so have my fantasies become more sparse and attenuated. I am no longer able to dream my way into complex sexual intrigues with beautiful women with lush foreign accents. Staring at striking young women is an activity I now consider to be at a scale of seriousness three levels below that of window-shopping. I have no power fantasies whatsoever: I don't wish to be CEO of General Motors, editor of *The New Yorker*, president of Yale, Secretary of HUD. My fantasies now include picturing myself enjoying long stretches in peaceful settings, amid the people I love, with an utter absence of aggravations, small and large.

Age consciousness has begun to set in. With the exception of classical music concerts, the places I frequently find myself in—restaurants, movies, plays—are places where I am often the oldest guy in the joint. "I think I have been more than most men conscious of my age," wrote Somerset Maugham. "My youth slipped past me unnoticed, and I was always burdened with the sense that I was growing old." Maugham reports, in *A Writer's Notebook*, that he always seemed older than his contemporaries, and adds that "it is not a very pleasant thing to recognize that to the young you are no longer an equal. You belong to a different generation. For them your race is run. They can look up to you; they can admire you; but you are apart from them; and in the long run will always find the companionship of persons of their own age more grateful than yours."

I have many younger friends. I used to have many friends much older than I. But by now, I believe the balance between younger and older has shifted. I do not myself feel a great gap between us, though perhaps my younger friends feel our age difference more than I. Can it be that they want from me what I wanted, in my turn, from my older friends: regard, respect, finally admiration to set the seal on my own less-than-sure estimate of my quality? It may seem odd to require the approval of one's elders when in one's fifties, but I felt this and still feel intense pleasure when I learn that someone I admired as a young man now has a good opinion of me.

Maugham goes on to report that one of the

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pleasures of growing older "is that on the whole you feel no need to do what you do not like." He adds that you are less likely to care what people think of you, whereas when young one is "bound hand and foot with the shackles of public opinion." Henry James, in a letter written in his sixtieth year to his friend Grace Norton, corroborates this, affirming that he has "reached a state of final beatitude in which one cares not a fraction of a straw what any one in the world *thinks* of one." I tend to agree. I might go a bit further and say that I am rather pleased to have some of the enemies I do; their dislike, I feel, honors me. When one gets to sixty, one is reconciled with oneself; one is what one is. Injustice of opinion matters less and less. Only true justice hurts; and, lucky fellow, I have come this far without having to undergo it.

What makes sixty feel rather different from, say, fifty-seven, is that finitude sets in in a big way—finitude combined, even now, with hope. If I can make it, I say, I'd like to teach ten more years. God willing, I say, five years from now I hope to have cleared the decks to work on an extended book I have long planned. With a little luck, I say, I can write another eight books before the lights go out. Knock wood, I say, if I can only make it to eighty, my grandchild will be twenty-seven and I will have helped see her into relatively safe harbor.

This notion of finitude, of no longer playing with a fully loaded shot clock, has been with me for some time. I note an entry in my journal for October 10, 1992: "Autumn setting in in earnest. Sweater weather. Leaves near peak of color change. How many more autumns will I see? God knows—and nobody else—and it is not clear how much He cares."

With the reign of finitude well in place, one's resignation becomes greater. No sooner does one begin to recognize how quickly time is moving—it's not the minutes, it's those damn decades—than one recognizes as well all that one won't accomplish, at least in this life. "In the next life, *perhaps*," I find myself more and more saying, trying to get the italics into my voice, whether I am referring to not being able to acquire a new foreign language, or read a multi-volume work, or play the piano, or go into retailing. I now know for certain that there are many things I shall never do: own a mansion, cook elegant dishes, read musical scores. I can, as they say, live with this; in fact, I am hoping to live for a good while with it.

One is resigned, too, to the world's comedy: idiots rising to the top, fanatics dressed up as idealists, boobs confidently in control. Henry James, in a formulation on which I cannot improve, noted:

> Life *is* a battle. On this point optimists and pessimists agree. Evil is insolent and strong; beauty enchanting but rare; goodness very apt to be weak; folly very apt to be defiant; wickedness to carry the day; imbeciles to be in very great places, people of sense in small, and mankind generally, unhappy. . . . In this there is mingled pain and delight, but over the mysterious mixture there hovers a visible rule, that bids us learn to will and seek to understand.

I wish that by now, at sixty, I could say that my own understanding of life is deep. It ain't. I remember, at twenty, taking a Shakespeare course in the University of Chicago's adult education program and being struck by how in the dark about life so many of my fellow students, many of them then in their forties and fifties, seemed. I don't know that I myself am currently all that much more enlightened. I like to think I am a little less connable than I was twenty or thirty years ago. I like to think I now at least understand how things *don't* happen, which is not at all the same as understanding how they *do* happen. I have never fallen for either of the two big stories of our century—Marxism and Freudianism—but that doesn't mean that I have come up with any big story of my own. In the Hegelian triad, I am all antithesis. I am left, really, with a few self-invented folk sayings: "In for a penny, in for a pounding" is one; "You live and you yearn" is another.

One of the things I yearn for, of course, is greater understanding. I don't at all like the idea of leaving the theater without understanding the play. Shall I be able to build up enough small insights to allow the parts to begin to approximate a whole? I continue to hope to get better at my work. For some years now, I have been telling myself that, as a writer, I have not yet begun to get worse, though I could use a good quality-control guy. Will I know about it when it happens? Short of dying or simply ceasing to write (as I type out this introductory phrase, the two seem to me almost the same) is there any way that getting

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worse can be avoided? Short of early death, probably not.

Being sixty changes a sentient person's notion of the future. Curt Gowdy, the old sports announcer, used to say of young athletes that they had their whole future ahead of them. Where else, I wondered, would anyone's future be? But, growing older, I begin to sense that much of my future is behind me. Certainly, I think differently of the future. It is no longer all open doors and wide horizons, enticing prospects and endless possibilities. If one has children and grandchildren, one's sense of futurity is bound up with them. I myself listen to the plans of the young—and the young tend to be full of plans—and try not to smile, remembering the old joke: "Know how to make God laugh? Tell him your plans."

If sixty changes one's sense of the future, it absolutely knocks the hell out of one's sense of progress. What, at this point, is one progressing toward? And yet life, without a sense of progress, can seem an arid thing. My dear friend Edward Shils, then in his late seventies, told me that he had to have a sense of intellectual progress if he were to continue as a teacher and a scholar. Without this sense, teaching becomes empty, scholarship barren. Edward, practicing what he preached, broadened and deepened his own knowledge of China when in his early eighties, and he began to teach courses in sinological subjects.

When younger, one tends, brimming with hope, to assume progress: that next year will be better than this; that one will continue to grow smarter; that fortune will smile on one. At sixty, it is no longer quite so easy to believe such things. Candide, after all, was a young man. Had Voltaire made him sixty, he would have been not merely a fool but an utterly hopeless idiot.

"It is *difficult* to know something," says Wittgenstein, "and to act as if you did not know it." What one knows at sixty is that time is beginning to run out. So one lessens one's expectations, limits one's possibilities, resigns oneself to the hard facts of life—and yet plays on through. Life may be a mug's game—a game, that is, one cannot finally win—but it still seems well worth playing. In an unexpected way, these limitations can make things seem even richer: one loses passion and gains detachment, gives up ambition and hopes for perspective. The comic element of life seems, in some ways, greater than ever.

Perspective is the trick of life, and I have not come anywhere near mastering it. Such perspective as I do have applies almost exclusively to other people, not to myself. Another of the pleasing things about attaining a certain age is that one begins to make out the arc of other people's careers. One sees patterns in their lives—the intellectual of poor character who has no real work to his credit as he nears fifty; the woman, stimulated by worthlessness in men, left alone in her sixties; the academic of profoundly bad taste who has wasted more than a decade of his adult life promoting a dreadfully dopey idea. These and other lives are amusing to contemplate.

I am, I fear, a sucker for the notion, first formulated by Novalis, that character is destiny. I feel reassured when people of strong character win out and people of poor character go down the drink. Evidence of a clean cause-and-effect relation clears the intellectual sinuses. Unfortunately, too often people of good character also go down the drink—for want of energy or because of bad breaks and crucially mistaken decisions—while the shoddy, the dreary, and the miscreant flourish, as the Greeks said, like the green bay tree. Naturally, I ascribe my own little successes in life to good character, though such character as I have is owing to my wish to avoid guilt and shame and to the loss, fairly early in life, of my taste for serious delinquency.

Writing to his friend Lady Georgiana Morpeth, who was going through a patch of depression, Sydney Smith recommended, among twenty different points, that she "be as busy as you can," "live as well as you dare," and have "short views of human life—no further than dinner or tea." Sound advice, especially the part about short views. At sixty, a long view may not, after all, be that long. Living with short views, enforced short views, may be one of the most interesting things about being sixty. Like hanging, it concentrates the mind—or at any rate ought to.

Does it concentrate it, however, too much on depression? Mild depression seems to me a natural and even sensible state to be in when entering late middle age. More than half the game is over, and one's equipment is in less than dazzling condition. A reader of a short story I not long ago published wrote me a

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letter in which he remarked on my *Weltmüdigkeit,* or world-weariness. He went on to say: "I hope I'm not being flip or jumping to a conclusion here—I'd guess that you, like many guys in their fifties and sixties, who have to preoccupy themselves with their own mortality (I am now in my middle seventies!), are also depressed." I prefer to think I'm not. I don't think of myself as being able to sustain depression beyond a few hours. But, maybe, it comes with the territory.

At sixty, one begins to spend a fair amount of time, at least mentally, with the dead. Oddly, I think less about my own death and more about dead friends and family. I miss them and find myself often talking to them. I cannot bear to remove from my Rolodex the names of such dead friends as Erich Heller, John Wain, and Samuel Lipman. The other day at the Paulina Market butcher shop I felt the presence of the now-dead friend who first took me there; my wife's uncle came strongly to mind as I passed Schulien's, a neighborhood German restaurant where he and I sometimes met before Cub games; my mother pops up everywhere, so often, in fact, that I may spend more time thinking about her now than I did when she was alive.

If one is lucky—that is to say, long-lived—at some point one's dead friends figure to outnumber one's living friends. Slowly, but increasingly, conversation about health with contemporaries begins to dominate; it already has begun with me. The other day's mail brought a catalogue from a necktie manufacturer in Vermont. Two of his ties seemed to me rather pleasing, but then I thought of all the neckties I now own—perhaps sixty of them—and decided that I already have enough, in the English phrase, "to see me out." Edward Shils would not agree. In his early eighties, he sometimes stopped to buy some piece of kitchen equipment; he claimed that doing so gave him a feel for the future; even on his deathbed, he still seemed pleased to acquire a new book.

But his was a remarkable generation. Someone recently said to me that he thought of the generation now in its late seventies and eighties as "the strong generation." Something to it. They lived through the Depression, fought in World War II, came into man- and womanhood early and lived their lives as, if you will pardon the expression, grown-ups. This gave so many of them not merely substance but gravity of a kind I do not find in my own or subsequent generations. Is it natural to think of one's own generation as a bit thin? Did such people as Joseph Conrad, Willa Cather, or William Faulkner think of their own generations as "thin"? Seems doubtful.

The feeling has begun to set in with me that I shall never again meet people as extraordinary as people I have met who are now departing the scene. As I view this scene, I find few celebrated people whom it would thrill me to meet: no one in scholarship, no one in sports, scarcely anyone in the arts. I cannot summon the awe. A few years ago, I was invited to a lunch at the White House for the presentation of medals to artists. When I was told I could not bring along a "spouse"—one of the ugliest words in the language—I declined, saying that I would instead content myself with a sandwich at home. I felt absolutely no regrets. Is this what is meant by being jaded?

I begin to take a keener interest in old age. I now cringe at stories about people who have sent up the yellow flag of senility. I note carefully the way younger people shun the very old, as if they were lepers, which has caused the phrase "the leprosy of old age" to pop into my mind, never, I fear, to be dislodged. I have begun to be a connoisseur of death, thinking a fair amount about the various diseases and modes of departure. I think, too, of styles of dying. A friend recently told me about his former lawyer, who loved opera. Knowing that his death from a debilitating disease was imminent, he arranged to travel to London and, seated in a wheelchair, he watched and listened to opera at Covent Garden on the last thirty evenings of his life. I read in Primo Levi's *Periodic Table* a description of Levi's Uncle Bararicô: In his old age, "he ate almost nothing, and in a general way he had no needs; he died at over ninety, with discretion and dignity." To die with discretion and dignity—that seems a fine thing.

Yet better, I realize, to live with discretion and dignity. What turning sixty, that fatidic age, has done is make me want to live more carefully in the years left to me. Observe I say "carefully," not "cautiously," though caution may enter into it, too. I wish to minimize my stupidity, maximize my intelligence. "For those who are not angry at things they should be angry at are fools," wrote Aristotle, and yet,

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I sense, to be angry is, somehow, to be wrong. I want to limit to amused contempt my response to life's irritations. I realize that I cannot stand in the way of regress. I wish to live with a respect for the complexity of life without unduly complicating my own life. ("*Complexe mais pas compliqué*," was one of Ravel's mottoes for his art.) Which is another way of saying that I long for the perspective that is supposed to accompany my age.

I dearly want to learn at last to live in the moment. From early adulthood, I have spent much of my time living, mentally, in the future. Ah, when I'm older, when I've achieved this or that, when things have at last fallen into place, then life will begin in great glorious earnest. The current temptation, now that the future has arrived, is to begin living in the past: to remember the good old days when I thought so much about the future. Enough already. I have to lose my yen for then, suture the future, and at long last put the pow! in now—to make each day, that is, as delight-filled as possible.

In his poem "Lullaby," W. H. Auden writes, "Let your last thinks be thanks." A good deal to that. Especially in my case, since, as has become apparent to me, I have been one of the world's lucky people: paid for doing what I like most to do, rich in friends, in good health, lucid, still laughing. I have had a very good roll of the dice.

Not that I am in any way ready to pass these dice along. Ten years ago, in Florence, in a shop outside the Church of San Lorenzo, I purchased an ascot—brilliant blue, niftily splashed with red, and flecked with gold. I have yet to wear it, thinking it too pretentious even for me, who normally doesn't at all mind a touch or two of pretention. How much longer do you suppose I have to wait to get away with wearing this ascot? My neck, already aflap with loose skin, is certainly ready. But am I? Not quite there yet, I feel. Perhaps in another decade.

Yes, at seventy, if I get there—I have just touched wood—I shall be ascotted and ready to roll. You will see me coming. You won't be able to miss me. I shall be this old dandy, Italian silk at his throat, looking a bit distracted, because he is still thinking of the future while living in the past—and wondering where all the time has gone.

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Heaven's Net

The Meeting of John Donne and Johannes Kepler

JEREMY BERNSTEIN

For of Meridians, and Parallels
Man hath weav'ed out a net, and this net throwne
Upon the Heavens, and now they are his owne.
—"An Anatomy of the World: The First Anniversary," John Donne

WHAT I AM GOING TO RELATE is the solution to a mystery. It is, I confess, a mystery that I might well have solved thirteen years ago when I first came across it. I can only plead distraction.

In 1983 I was sent for review by *The New Yorker* magazine Daniel Boorstin's then newly published book *The Discoverers.* It may be remembered that this was Boorstin's kaleidoscopic account of the history of scientific discovery from Aristotle to Einstein. I found the book somewhat maddening—a mixture of brilliant insights, incorrect statements, and paths not followed. Among the latter was the following sentence that came just after Boorstin had quoted the famous lines of John Donne taken from his poem "An Anatomy of the World: The First Anniversary": "And new Philosophy calls all in doubt / The Element of fire is quite put out . . . ," which refers to the new astronomical discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler. Boorstin then casually remarks, "In 1619, when Donne visited the Continent he took the trouble to visit Kepler in the remote Austrian town of Linz."

When I first read this laconic sentence, I remember sitting bolt upright in my chair. Boorstin was announcing an encounter between arguably the greatest poet of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth

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centuries and unarguably one of the greatest astronomers who has ever lived. But that is all he does—just announce—no explanation, nothing. As I wrote in my review, "One longs to know what they talked about—even in what language. Kepler was always desperate to find converts to the Copernican system. What effect did the encounter have on the two men? Did it relieve the anxiety about the new cosmology which Donne suggests in the line (from the same poem) ''Tis all in peeces, all cohaerence gone . . . '?" In fact, did this unlikely encounter take place at all? How does Boorstin know? There are no specific references in his book. One is at a loss. This was the mystery, and I more or less forgot about it for the next twelve years.

This past summer I happened to pick up *The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry* by T. S. Eliot. When I saw the book I immediately thought back to the old mystery: Did Donne meet Kepler? But I soon found that on this Eliot was no help either. Kepler does not appear in the index, and neither do Copernicus or Galileo for that matter. The science in Donne's poetry was not Eliot's concern. Nonetheless, I was now determined to find out about this meeting. I decided that the next thing to do was to have a go at Kepler directly. The way to start was to have a look at the Kepler entry in the *Dictionary of Scientific Biography.* Here I drew blood—a droplet. The Kepler entry, which runs to more than twenty pages, was written by Owen Gingerich of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. Gingerich, who is both an astronomer and a historian of science, has made many studies of Kepler. He is an expert and a man to be taken seriously. Toward the end of his entry I found the sentence " . . . in 1619 the English poet John Donne had visited him [Kepler] in Linz, and in 1620 the English ambassador Sir Henry Wotton had called on him in Linz and had invited him to England." Since this was published in 1973 and since Boorstin's book was written in 1983, a reasonable assumption is that the latter had gotten his information from the former. But Gingerich, like Boorstin, offered no specific documentation. I had no more idea of the details of the visit than I had had before. However, Gingerich did offer an extensive bibliography.

Two of the books seemed both relevant and accessible. The first was a biography by the late Max Caspar called simply *Kepler.* Caspar, who died in 1956 at the age of seventy-six, spent much of his life studying Kepler and was considered the leading scholar on the subject. Among other things, he was responsible for editing Kepler's complete oeuvre, including, important for what follows, his vast correspondence. The only other scientist of comparable ability that I know of who wrote so many letters was Einstein. Caspar's biography is quite wonderful, and very readable, but of Donne there is not a word.

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Gingerich also cited Arthur Koestler's *The Sleepwalkers.* This is a fascinating book in which Koestler, with a novelist's eye, studies the character of the scientists, including Kepler, who created the New Astronomy. There are several references to Donne, many of which make the interesting point that in Donne's prose polemic *Ignatius His Conclave,* Kepler and the other New Astronomers are mentioned by name, indicating that Donne was familiar with their work. But of the hypothetical meeting of the two men there is not a word. Given Koestler's interest in this kind of personal detail, one can only assume that when his book was published in 1963 no one knew about the meeting. That, it turns out, is correct. Something, therefore, must have happened between 1963 and 1973 when Gingerich made his reference.

This was as far as I was able to go with Kepler, at least using references that were available to me, so I decided to return to Donne. The standard biography of Donne was written by the late R. C. Bald. Professor Bald did not live to finish his book, which was completed by W. Milgate of the Australian National University. It is a splendid biography, but there is only one mention of Kepler. This has to do with whether or not Donne read and was influenced by Kepler's science fiction novella, *Somnium,* which was circulating in manuscript form during Donne's lifetime. It was only published after both Kepler and Donne had died. Unlike Professor Bald, and for reasons I will explain, I do not find the evidence for this particular influence of Kepler on Donne very convincing, but, in any event, there is in Bald's book no suggestion that the two men actually ever met.

The book does make it quite clear that the only time Kepler and Donne *could* have met was in October of 1619. In February of 1619 James Hay—Lord Doncaster—had been given a diplomatic mission on the Continent by King James I to try to mediate the growing tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Middle Europe. The King had also appointed Donne chaplain to this mission. During the summer and fall of 1619, the mission wound its way eastward through Europe in the quest of one last meeting with the recently anointed Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand of Styria in the hope of enlisting his help in this mediation. Doncaster, who had met unsuccessfully with Ferdinand earlier, finally caught up with him again in early November in Graz—an encounter that Donne witnessed. From Bald's book we learn that Doncaster—and presumably Donne—had, prior to this encounter, sailed down the Danube from Germany to Vienna, where they arrived on November 2. They then proceeded to Graz. But Linz was on the way to Vienna. One would therefore guess from Bald's chronology that any meeting between Donne and Kepler had to have

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taken place before November 2 while the party was proceeding on the Danube to Vienna.

Now I felt myself closing in. I had pinned down the approximate date of the meeting and even the circumstances. But I was completely stuck. What to do next? It occurred to me to put my problem to a colleague. For the last few years I have been exchanging information about the World War II German nuclear program with a young historian of science named Cathryn Carson. Carson does not work in the history of seventeenth-century astronomy, but she did get her degree at Harvard. Perhaps she had taken a course with Gingerich and the subject of Kepler and Donne had come up. I e-mailed her at Berkeley, where she is now teaching. She replied that she had never heard of the meeting but she would e-mail Gingerich. Shortly thereafter she sent me a copy of an e-mail she had received from Gingerich. It had the missing reference! But it was something of a surprise. The reference was to a 1971 article entitled "Donne's Meeting with Kepler: A Previously Unknown Episode," which had appeared in the *Philological Quarterly*, written by a man named Wilbur Applebaum. I confess that neither the name of the author, nor of the journal, was familiar to me, though I later learned that it is a standard journal in its field and that Applebaum was an eminent historian of science. The Berkeley library had the journal and, in short order, Carson faxed me a copy. The mystery was now about to be solved—I hoped.

Applebaum, who was then at the University of Illinois, had made his discovery, I guessed from his brief three-page note, while he was perusing the edited version, which Caspar had done in collaboration with Walther von Dyck and Franz Hammer, of Kepler's collected works. (Later, he informed me that when he was looking through the index, he had come across an entry on Donne that immediately aroused his curiosity.) In volume 16, Applebaum discovered a letter that seems to have been completely overlooked by both Donne and Kepler scholars. He does not present the letter in full or even say what language it was written in—German, it turns out—but he does give a few of the essentials. There is no date on the letter and the correspondent, who, though Applebaum does not tell us, turns out to be a woman, is unnamed. The editors, as Applebaum points out, have supplied the wrong date—namely, 1608—as the date of the letter. The letter refers to an event that could only have taken place in 1619—Kepler's meeting with Donne and Lord Doncaster—spelled "Dancastre" in the letter. Donne is referred to as Doctore Theologo, which also helps to date the letter, since he did not receive this honorary doctor's degree from Cambridge University until March of 1615. The letter even fixes the meeting as having taken place on

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October 23, which fits the chronology adumbrated by Professor Bald.

I will not try to discuss the contents of the letter here, but will come back to it when I explain, as nearly as I can tell, why there was such a meeting and what, if anything, were its consequences. Needless to say, once I learned of this letter, I asked Carson if she could find it in the Berkeley library edition of Kepler's collected works. This she did. At the end of Applebaum's note, he muses, "It would be interesting if Donne scholars could discover any reference in Donne's works or manuscripts to his meeting with Kepler." It would indeed. Certainly no one came forward in response to my query in *The New Yorker,* and, Applebaum informed me, no one came forward to answer his request either. But now allow me to reconstruct the "world-lines"—the trajectories in space and time—that led to this extraordinary encounter on October 23, 1619.

Johannes Kepler was born on December 27, 1571, in the small Swabian town of Weil-der-Stadt in southwest Germany. One of the pleasures in studying the life of Kepler is reading his own version of it. Until the present vogue of scientists writing with increasing enthusiasm about what Einstein called, with some scorn, the "merely personal," no scientist—certainly no great scientist—has written about him or herself with the candor of Kepler. Of his father, a professional soldier who deserted the family, Kepler wrote that he was "vicious, inflexible, quarrelsome, and doomed to come to a bad end. . . . [He] treated my mother extremely ill, went finally into exile and died." Of his mother, Kepler wrote that she was "small, thin, swarthy, gossiping and quarrelsome, of a bad disposition." What Kepler could not have foreseen when he wrote this was that beginning in 1615 he would spend the next six years defending his mother from the charge that she was a *witch.* The denouement occurred in the fall of 1621 when, under threat of torture, his poor mother insisted that she had nothing to admit. She was freed, but died a few months later.

Kepler was equally hard on himself. In the family horoscope he produces a chronology that, as Koestler notes, reads like "the diary of Job." He notes that at age fourteen and fifteen he "suffered continually from skin ailments, often severe sores, often from the scabs of chronic putrid wounds in my feet which healed badly and kept breaking out again. On the middle finger of my right hand I had a worm, on the left a huge sore." This dreadful litany continues through 1592, when, at age twenty-one, he reports: "At Cupinga's I was offered union with a virgin; on New Year's Eve I achieved this with the greatest possible difficulty, experiencing the most acute pains of the bladder."

At about the same time, Donne, who was a few months younger than Kepler—his exact birth date is uncertain—was being described

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by a contemporary as a "great visitor of Ladies, a great frequenter of Playes, a great writer of conceited Verses." In fact, it is likely that most of Donne's magnificent love poems—"For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love . . ." were written before he was twenty-five—written, as he later said, by "Jack Donne" and not "Dr. Donne." Kepler was twenty-six when he produced his Job-like horoscope. If Donne had actually met Kepler at this time, he would almost certainly have thought him some sort of a Martian.

Kepler's early education was desultory. He was too sickly and frail to become an agricultural laborer. The only future his family could envision for him was to enter the Lutheran ministry. As it happened, after the Dukes of Wuertemberg converted to Lutheranism, they had established a number of seminaries that could lead eventually to a state-sponsored education at the University of Tuebingen, then to the Theological Faculty and the ministry. One of the features of the seminaries was Latin. The curriculum was in Latin. Many students of Kepler's opus have remarked on the elegance of his Latin compared to his German. There is something earthy, even ungrammatical, about Kepler's German, as the letter that Applebaum turned up confirms.

From the beginning, Kepler's religious beliefs—which, along with his science were at the core of his life—were somewhat unconventional. He was a committed Lutheran but he was more tolerant of other religions than was fashionable in an age of extreme religious intolerance. Throughout his life Kepler suffered terribly for his heterodoxy. One's heart goes out to him, as time after time he is nearly destroyed because, when it came to religious principles, Kepler would not budge an inch.

In contrast, any student of Donne's life will be troubled by Donne's apostasy. Donne was born into a very distinguished Catholic family. On his mother's side there was even a connection to Sir Thomas More. Donne was, at least as a young man, proud of his ancestry and his religion. But being a Catholic at the end of the sixteenth century in England put one in mortal danger. One could be tortured to death in ways almost too unbearable to describe, especially if one was caught harboring a Jesuit or indeed any sort of Catholic priest. In 1593 Donne's brother Henry, who was a year younger, was arrested because he had had a man suspected of being a priest in his rooms. He would surely have been convicted of a felony, except that he died from the plague while awaiting trial in jail.

For an English Catholic who did not choose to emigrate—as many did—there were three choices. One could practice one's religion clandestinely, hoping not to be caught. (During the reign of Queen Elizabeth "recusants," as they were called, could practice their religion

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discretely, provided they also went to the Anglican service on Sundays and paid huge fines.) One could avow one's Catholicism openly and accept martyrdom, as some did. Or one could convert to the official Anglican creed. Donne did the first and then the last. When he matriculated at Oxford in 1584, his age was given as eleven. He was actually a year older, but at the age of sixteen, to obtain an Oxford degree, he would have been required to take an oath of allegiance to the Church of England. His modified age gave him an extra year at the university. As it was, he never graduated, and it is thought that he might have attended Cambridge for a few years after he left Oxford.

But John Donne was not a martyr. On the contrary, his ambition was to become part of the English establishment. By 1597, when Donne became secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, the so-called Lord Keeper of the Great Seal (the highest honor a lawyer could then earn) who had himself converted, and who was in a position to help Donne move up the governmental ladder, Donne had become an Anglican. This must have generated a life-long agitation of his conscience. Donne's polemics against the Jesuits, who would not compromise, border on the irrational. There is something in what Dr. Johnson remarked a century later: "A convert from Popery to Protestantism gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as anything that he retains, there is so much laceration of mind in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere or lasting." *Lasting* Donne's conversion was. *Sincere* is another matter.

When it came to religion, Johannes Kepler's conscience was clear and his outlook tolerant. Kepler graduated from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Tuebingen at the age of twenty. He was fortunate to have had as one of his teachers Michael Maestlin, an exceedingly competent astronomer. Maestlin taught Copernican astronomy—the doctrine that the earth moved around the sun and revolved on its axis every twenty-four hours, which Copernicus had published more or less on his deathbed in 1543—in his advanced classes, which Kepler took. Kepler was grateful throughout his life for Maestlin's introduction to astronomy and, above all, to the work of Copernicus. He kept up a correspondence with his teacher, who was twenty years older than he, which Maestlin had more and more difficulty responding to.

The situation is not unfamiliar. Maestlin was very good, but Kepler was a genius. In fact, what most of us learn in our general science classes as the "Copernican system" is, as we shall see, rather far removed from what Maestlin taught Kepler—that is, far removed from what Copernicus actually did. The modifications are owing to Kepler. They represent radical departures from Copernicus's cosmology. They were too much for Maestlin. I think, incidentally, they were also too

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much for Donne. From the references to the New Astronomy in his poetry, it is my feeling, as I shall explain, that Donne did not really understand it in detail.

After his graduation, Kepler then matriculated at the Theological Faculty, there to begin his studies to become a Lutheran pastor. He had no thought of becoming an astronomer. His theological studies were to have ended in 1594 with his entrance into the ministry. But before that happened there occurred one of those twists of fate that seem to have been characteristic of Kepler's life and that kept propelling him toward his real destiny. The mathematics teacher at the Protestant seminary in Graz, Austria, died and, as happened frequently at the time, the seminary turned to the University of Tuebingen in Germany to find a suitable replacement. Mathematical genius is pretty difficult to hide and, as strange as Kepler may have seemed as a person, there was no doubt in anybody's mind that he was the most highly qualified individual to send to Graz. He spent the next six years there and never returned to his native Germany except as a visitor.

On July 9, 1595, while teaching a class in Graz, Kepler had an epiphany. From our point of view, it was almost entirely mad. It would hardly be worth mentioning in the present context, except that just before Donne's visit in 1619 Kepler had revisited the subject and had written a book *Harmonices mundi,* or *Harmony of the World,* which was, it appears, the main subject of conversation between the two men. A significant difference between this book and the first, *A Cosmographic Mystery* (1596), was that the latter contained, along with the mystical detritus, an almost casual discussion of one of Kepler's greatest astronomical discoveries: the very non-intuitive connection between the length of time it takes a planet to complete one orbit around the sun—or its period—and the average distance of the planet from the sun. This is called Kepler's Third Law, and in mathematical language it states that the ratio of the square of the period of a planet to the cube of its distance from the sun is the same for all planets. It took Newton, a half century later, to explain why it was true.

The question that Kepler posed in 1595 was in and of itself not unreasonable. He knew of six planets: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Pluto, Uranus, and Neptune had not yet been discovered. He wanted to account for the fact that there were *six* planets and he wanted to account for the five distances between them, which had been roughly determined by Copernicus. Kepler knew—it had been known since Euclid—that there were *five* so-called regular solids—solids like the cube, which is bounded by six squares, and the pyramid, which is bounded by four equilateral triangles. He knew that

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a sphere could be put outside each of these solids, so that all the vertices touched its surface. Similarly one can put a sphere inside each solid, so that the sphere touches all its boundaries in the center. What Kepler tried to do was to put each planet on a sphere with one of the regular solids inside it and another outside it. This bizarre scheme did not even work on its own terms. He never could fit the planet Mercury. But Kepler was smitten by it. He sent copies of his book to every astronomer he could think of.

Most important for what happened later, Kepler sent a copy to the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe. Brahe was a great observational astronomer who had some not entirely realized theoretical ideas. He saw in Kepler, who was his junior by some twenty-five years, a mathematician of potential genius who might help him out. The two connected sooner than either of them would probably have predicted. I believe, and I am not alone in this, that if Kepler had died just after the publication of his book—always a possibility in the disease-ridden environment in which everyone then lived—he would simply have been an uninteresting historical curiosity. What made him such a great astronomer was the combination of his mystical urge to obtain ultimate laws with an absolute sense of empirical rigor. Kepler was never satisfied until whatever theory he had created fit the known facts—or at least as precisely as they were known.

In 1597 Kepler married for the first time. His wife (née Barbara Muehleck) was at the age of twenty-three already twice a widow. She, or her family, had pretensions, and it took some negotiation before Kepler, a poor schoolmaster, was allowed to marry her. One wonders why he did, since he described her as being "simple of mind and fat of body," and worse. It does not seem to have been a very happy marriage, although it lasted fourteen years, until her death. She had borne him five children, two of whom survived. In 1613 he re-married, to Susanna Reuttinger, an orphan of twenty-four, who bore him seven children of whom, again, only two survived infancy and early childhood.

Donne's marriage, to Anne More, which took place in December of 1601, was, on the other hand, the stuff of which operas are written. When he married her she was sixteen or seventeen and Donne twenty-nine. She had been living under the protection of Sir Thomas Egerton, the very Lord Keeper whose secretary Donne then was. She was the niece of Egerton's second wife. She was the daughter of Sir George More, a very influential political figure noted for his choleric temper. Knowing that her father would not approve of the marriage—Anne was still a minor—but being very much in love, the couple married secretly, thinking, naively as it turned out, that the old man

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might forgive them. When he was informed in February, he went berserk. He had Donne arrested for marrying a minor and tried, unsuccessfully, to get the marriage annulled. He did succeed in getting Donne fired, and, though he was released from jail, Donne was kept away from his wife until April.

After this episode, Donne was never able to get another position with the government despite repeated attempts. He eked out a living for several years supported by patrons. King James, who seemed to take special interest in Catholic converts if they had connections such as Donne's, made it clear that it was his wish that Donne be ordained in the Anglican church. It is difficult to know Donne's real feelings about this, but in January 1615 he was ordained as deacon and priest in St. Paul's Cathedral, and the same year he was given his honorary doctorate. It is also difficult to know his feelings about his marriage. Izaak Walton, his contemporary, remarked in his biographical sketch of Donne that Donne's marriage was the "remarkable errour [*sic*] of his life," although he added that "God . . . blest them with so mutual and cordial affections as in the midst of their sufferings made their bread and sorrow taste more pleasantly than the banquets of dull and low-spirited people." Before Anne died in August 1617, she had given birth to twelve(!) children. Five of them died either at birth or soon after. "Death be not proud . . . "

There is one book of Kepler's that we can be sure that Donne read, *De Stella Nova*, or *Of New Stars*, to use its commonly shortened title, which Kepler published in 1606. We can be sure because there is a marginal note to this effect in Donne's strange tract *Biathanatos*, which he wrote two years later. *Biathanatos* is an attempt by Donne to argue that committing suicide is not necessarily a sin. Why a tract on this subject should make reference to a book on "new stars" I will explain as soon as I have explained why Kepler's book was published in Prague.

When we left Kepler he was living peacefully in Graz with his family. But increasingly the Counter-Reformation made the lives of Protestants there more and more difficult. On July 27, 1600, the Archduke Ferdinand, a Catholic who ruled Graz, published a decree that demanded that everyone in the community submit to a public examination of his or her faith in four days. If Protestants were not prepared to adopt Catholicism, they would be expelled from the city and their property confiscated. Accepting Catholicism for the sake of saving his job was something that Kepler was not prepared to do. Fortunately for him—and here is another example of his remarkable good fortune—in 1599 Brahe, after a dispute with the Danish authorities, had come to Prague. He was appointed the Imperial Mathematician—that is, official astronomer and astrologer—for the Emperor Rudolph. Kepler

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had visited Brahe just after his arrival and Brahe, wanting mathematical help, now arranged a position for him. Thus Kepler came to Prague.

In 1572 Brahe had witnessed the explosion of a supernova in the constellation Taurus in our galaxy. Supernovae explosions in our galaxy are rare, hence it was remarkable—again Kepler's great luck—that there was a second explosion in September 1604 in the constellation Serpentarius. By this time Brahe had been dead for three years and Kepler had succeeded him in the job of Imperial Mathematician. It was these new stars that were the subject of Kepler's book. But what was their relevance to Donne? Aristotle, and his followers among the Schoolmen, had maintained that the stars were made of a "fifth essence"—the "quinta essentia"—and not of earth, air, fire, and water. This essence was supposed to be indestructible and the stars that were made out of them immutable. But the new stars showed that stars were in fact mutable. Aristotle and his followers in the schools were simply wrong. If they were wrong about this they could be wrong about anything, including a moral question like the ethics of suicide. This is the point Donne made. He writes in his *Biathanatos*, " . . . his [Aristotle's] Schollers stubbornly maintain his Proposition [the immutability of stars] still, though by many experiences of new Stars, the reason which moved Aristotle seems now to be utterly defeated." The New Astronomy was not merely a new science. It was a challenge to an entire moral and theological order. When Donne wrote, "'Tis all in peeces, all cohaerence gone," he meant it.

There is one piece of writing by Donne that we are sure Kepler read. In 1611 Donne published, in both Latin and English, the anonymous polemic satire that he called *Ignatius, His Conclave.* Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus—the Jesuit order—had been canonized by Pope Gregory XV in 1622. The Jesuits reduced Donne to rage. In this satire Donne imagines Ignatius in hell seated next to Lucifer with whom he strikes up a companionship. This scene is witnessed by the "I" representing the author who has had "liberty to wander through all places, and to survey and reckon all the roomes, and all the volumes of the heavens, and to comprehend the situation, the dimensions, the nature, the people, and the policy, both of the swimming Ilands, the *Planets*, and of all those which are fixed in the firmament." But having given a bold rendering of the furniture of the universe, the narrator backs off. He remarks, "I thinke it an honester part as yet to be silent, than to do *Galileo* wrong by speaking of it, who of late hath summoned the other worlds, the Stars to come neerer to him, and give him an account of themselves."

The previous year Galileo, using the newly discovered telescope,

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had found new stars, the moons of Jupiter, and all sorts of new features on our moon. He had published a book—*Siderius nuncius*, or *Starry Messenger*—describing these discoveries that created a sensation. Donne had read the book and a year later makes reference to it. But he goes on, "Or to Keepler [*sic*], who (as himselfe testifies of himselfe) *ever since* Tycho Braches [*sic*] *death hath received it into his care, that no new thing should be done in heaven without his knowledge.*" This shows that not only was Donne aware of Kepler, but he even knew that Kepler had inherited Tycho Brahe's position. But how do we know that Kepler read this? He tells us.

In 1609 Kepler wrote the first version of his science fiction novella *Somnium, Sive Astronomia Lunaris*—usually translated simply as *The Dream.* It concerns an imaginary voyage to the moon. (The cast of characters includes Fiolxhilde, the mother of the narrator. A few years later Kepler's own mother, who resembles the fictional Fiolxhilde, began her trials for witchcraft.) Like many other science fiction writers, Kepler was more concerned with describing the science of the moon than he was with the fiction. The original version of *The Dream* was not published but did circulate in manuscript. As we have mentioned, it has been claimed that Donne read it—Kepler, as we shall see, thought so. In 1621, two years after Donne's visit, Kepler took up the *Somnium* again. This time he added 223 footnotes, which actually exceeded in length the original novella.

The book was not published until 1634, or four years after Kepler's death. Footnote 8 begins, "If I am not mistaken, the author of that insolent satire called *Ignatius, His Conclave*, got hold of a copy of this little work of mine; for he stings me by name at the very beginning. As he goes along he brings poor Copernicus before the tribunal of Pluto. . . ." The first thing that strikes one about this quotation is why is there any doubt in Kepler's mind whether the "author [Donne] of that insolent satire . . . got hold of a copy?" After all, Donne had visited Kepler just a few years earlier. Why didn't Kepler simply ask him? The answer, it seems to me, is evident. Kepler did not know that it was Donne who wrote it and Donne did not tell him. As far as I know, the first publication of *Ignatius* in which Donne was the acknowledged author occurred in 1652, some twenty years after the poet's death. When, in his letter—the one Applebaum turned up—Kepler described Donne's visit, no mention is made of *Ignatius* or indeed of anything Donne wrote. In fact, one is led to wonder if Kepler had any idea of exactly who Donne was.

It has been sometimes claimed that the fact that both *Ignatius* and *The Dream* involve voyages to the moon implies that Donne must have read Kepler before writing his polemic. I don't think so. In the first

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place, both men had such vivid imaginations that it is hard to understand why Donne would have *needed* to read Kepler to think of moon travel. He had read Galileo. That would have been inspiration enough. Besides, the two "voyages" are quite different. Kepler's travelers take an actual trip to the moon. They are carefully selected. Kepler writes, "No inactive persons are accepted into our company; no fat ones, no pleasure-loving ones, we choose only those who have spent their lives on horseback, or have shipped often to the Indies and are accustomed to subsisting on hardtack, garlic, dried fish, and such unpalatable fare. Especially suited are dried up old crones who since childhood have ridden over great stretches of the earth at night in tattered cloaks on goats or pitchforks. No Germans are suitable, but we do not despise the lean hard bodies of the Spaniards." Kepler is careful to specify the distance to be traveled—fifty thousand "German miles"—which is about the distance to the moon if one takes Kepler's definition of the German mile that he gives in one of his footnotes. He is somewhat vague on the method of propulsion. He writes: "We congregate in force and seize a man of this sort; all together lifting him from beneath, we carry him aloft." And away they go!

Donne, on the other hand, describes a *potential* voyage to the moon. He employs a delightful conceit inspired by Galileo's telescope. The voyager can make "new *Glasses*" which will "draw the *Moone*, like a boate floating upon the water, as neere the earth as he will." Now one can just board the "boat." But, Donne goes on to say, it will be the Jesuits who will get on the now nearby moon-ship in order to establish a "*Lunatique Church*" on our celestial neighbor. On the subject of the Jesuits Donne was relentless.

The "world-lines" of Donne and Kepler are now moving closer. But we still have to get Kepler to Linz from Prague and Donne to the European continent. Kepler remained in Prague from 1600 to 1612. His first few years there were the most productive of his scientific life. He transformed celestial mechanics forever. In doing so, in my view, he accomplished intellectual feats of overcoming that were comparable to what Einstein did when he created the theory of relativity. What he had to overcome was a two-thousand-year idée fixe on how celestial bodies were allowed to move. From the ancient Greeks until Kepler, the only motion allowed to these bodies was uniform and circular. Some of the early astronomer-philosophers envisioned celestial objects as being attached to crystalline spheres and some did not. But attached or not, the motions could only be uniform and circular. Unfortunately, the actual motions of the planets observed against the stars are neither uniform nor circular. In fact, the planets, from time

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to time, reverse their direction, something that is known as "retrograde motion."

Hence the problem posed to these savants was how to "save the appearances"—that is, how to reconcile the observed motions with the metaphysical demand that they be in "reality" uniform and circular.

In the ancient world the most complete and successful attempt to "save the appearances" was made in the second century A.D. by the Alexandrine polymath Claudius Ptolemy. In the Ptolemaic system the earth was stationary at the center of the universe. All the heavenly bodies revolved around the earth. But the motion of, say, a planet was not simply a uniform motion in a circle. There would be a sort of "guide point" that moved on a big circle. Around that the planet moved along a second, smaller circle—making a so-called epicycle. If that didn't work one could add more circles or one could displace the earth from the center. A modern scientist confronted with this scheme understands immediately why, if pushed hard enough, it will work. What is happening is that the periodic motion of the planet is being analyzed in what is called a series of harmonics. We do this all the time. We can make the series as accurate as we want by including more and more terms—by adding more epicycles. In the Ptolemaic scheme it required some thirty epicycles to reproduce the planetary motions to the degree of accuracy to which they were known.

Copernicus changed the reference point from the earth to the sun—and, indeed, added *more* epicycles. In fact, if you look at an actual drawing of the Copernican system as developed by Copernicus, it will be a nest of circles on top of circles. It will bear almost no resemblance to the neat diagrams of the solar system you may remember from your general science course. Tycho complicated things still further by introducing a system in which the earth was at rest while the planets circled the moving sun. It was this chimera that Kepler had been engaged to work on. Fortunately, Tycho died in October of 1601 before Kepler was forced to spend too much of his time on it—again Kepler's good luck.

Tycho and his assistants had assembled the most accurate data on the orbit of the planet Mars that had ever been taken. After Tycho's death, Kepler inherited the data and added some of his own. He also found a very ingenious way—using Mars as a reference point—to plot the orbit of the earth around the sun. This had never been done before. It turned out that the earth's motion was not uniform either. But what was the orbit of Mars or, for that matter, of any planet? After an extraordinary intellectual effort, by Easter of 1605, Kepler finally realized that it was an ellipse. You may remember from your high school geometry classes how to draw an ellipse. You take a string and

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tie down the ends with thumbtacks. Then you take a pencil and stretch the string and move it around a complete cycle to make your ellipse. The positions of the thumbtacks are called the "foci" of the ellipse. If you make the foci coincide, then you have a circle, so that, in a sense, the ellipse is the simplest generalization of the circle. In Kepler's system—our system—the sun is at one of the foci of the orbital ellipse. Hence, not only is the earth displaced from its central position, but the sun is not even at the center.

One is awed by the sheer force of the intellectual work that Kepler did. He had no computing machines. All the arithmetic was done by hand—hundreds of pages that still survive. He did not even have the mathematics he needed: the differential and integral calculus that would be developed later in the century by Newton and Leibniz. But, when he needed them, he invented approximation methods to a calculus that he did not even know existed. Kepler had a correct intuition about how the whole mechanism worked. He thought that it must be due to a force that emanates from the sun. The planets move more rapidly when they are close to the sun since, Kepler reasoned, they are subjected to a greater force. Magnetism was then being studied, so he thought that it might be magnetism. It isn't. What it is, as Newton pointed out, is gravity.

But it was Kepler who first understood that the motion around the planetary orbits was not uniform. Nonetheless, he discovered a remarkable regularity. If you draw a line to the planet from the sun, then in equal amounts of time the line to the planet, despite the nonuniformity of the motion, will sweep out equal areas. These two discoveries along with the relation he found a decade later between the lengths of planetary periods and their distances from the sun are known as Kepler's Three Laws. They were empirical discoveries but guided by Kepler's intuition and his insistence that the planets should have the same physics as our own. It took the genius of Newton to show how they could be derived directly from the dynamics of gravitation.

Kepler put his elliptical discoveries into a book—*Astronomia nova*, to give its abbreviated Latin title—*The New Astronomy*, which he finally published in 1609. It can rightly be called the first truly modern astronomy book. I do not think Donne could have understood much of it, if he read it, which I also doubt. It is one thing to have a realization of the general implications of changing the locus of the solar system from the earth to the sun, or of discovering "new stars"; but it is quite another to understand the sort of thing that Kepler did in *The New Astronomy*. Let me give a specific example from Donne's poetry that shows that he really did not understand in detail what had happened.

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My example is taken from the poem "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," which some Donne scholars think was written in 1611. The verse in question reads,

> Moving of th'earth brings harmes and feares,
> Men reckon what it did and meant,
> But trepidation of the spheares,
> Though greater farre, is innocent.

In the third line the use of "trepidation" resonates with "harmes and feares." But the rest of the line and the next show that Donne knew the astronomical usage of the term then current. The apparent motion of the sun, as measured in relation to the stars, is also not regular. At the equinoxes the sun reverses its direction. But the astronomers, up to and including Copernicus, claimed that at the equinoxes there was an additional solar motion—a kind of oscillation that was called trepidation. The pre-Copernican astronomers, who believed that the stars were attached to giant celestial spheres, accounted for this by a "trepidation of the spheares"—a motion that one might think of as "innocent" since the spheres were made of the special celestial material. But Copernicus accounted for all the apparent motions of the sun against the stars by the earth's rotation about the sun and the revolution of the earth on its axis. There was in his system no "trepidation of the spheares" but rather a trepidation of the *earth.*

Donne has missed this very essential difference. It is much less surprising that he missed Brahe's discovery that there is no such thing as trepidation. The earlier astronomers had simply been wrong. There is nothing to account for, although, despite Brahe's measurements that Kepler must have known about, Kepler still kept some slight irregularity in his analysis of the sun's motion. But this, too, would have been accounted for by a trepidation of the earth. It is said that this poem was written for Donne's wife before he left for France on an earlier trip. "No tear floods, nor sigh-tempests move," he tells her.

Kepler's position in Prague was viable only so long as the Emperor Rudolph remained in power. But Rudolph showed increasing signs of mental instability and was forced to abdicate in 1611. His brother Matthias succeeded him the following year. With the abdication of Rudolph, Kepler began looking for a more secure position. In 1612 he accepted one in Linz as the district mathematician and teacher in the district school. This was not a position with the distinction Kepler deserved, but he accepted it because he thought that his wife, who never liked Prague, might be happier there. But before she could make the move, she died of typhus. Kepler remained in Linz, the

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capital of Upper Austria, until 1626, the longest he had ever lived in any single place. Now we have gotten Kepler to Linz.

It remains to get Donne to the Continent. Rather than attempt anything like a full accounting of the political and religious history that led up to the 1619 diplomatic mission on which Donne served, I will begin with King James I of England and his two surviving children, Princess Elizabeth and her younger brother Prince Charles. By the epoch we are considering, the rest of the King's offspring had died. King James, it may be recalled, was the son of Mary, Queen of Scots. This remarkable woman, who had been forced to abdicate in favor of her infant son, was imprisoned in England and was finally executed in 1578. When Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603 with no progeny of her own, James, who had been ruling Scotland as James VI, became James I of England. In the meanwhile he had married Princess Anne of Denmark. One of the marriage ceremonies in 1589 was performed in Copenhagen. It was the King's only trip to the Continent, and while there, among other things, he visited Tycho Brahe's observatory. The mother of his bride, Sophia of Mecklenburg, the then queen mother of Denmark, was one of Tycho's patrons. As far as I can tell, this was King James's only venture into astronomy. He was presented with a signed copy of Kepler's book on the new stars. It is not clear that he ever read it.

This was an era when royal marriages were moves in a diplomatic chess game. When it came time for Princess Elizabeth and Prince Charles to marry, the choice of their mates depended a great deal on what ends the King wanted them to serve. It was Princess Elizabeth's turn first. After some back and forth with other suitors, she was betrothed in 1613 to Frederick V, the Protestant Elector Palatine of the Rhine. In 1619, after the death of Emperor Rudolph's brother Matthias, Frederick served briefly as the King of Bohemia, until he was deposed in 1620 by a Catholic army of Spaniards and Bavarians. He was sent into exile and died in obscurity in Germany. It was Frederick who was supposed to have protected the interests of Protestants in central Europe—a matter of concern to King James, who was mindful of the well-being of his daughter.

King James was not exactly noted for his physical courage. At meetings of his court in England he wore a stiletto-proof vest. The King abhorred violence and, in particular, war. One of King James's notions for avoiding a war with Catholic Spain was to try to marry Charles off to a Spanish princess: the Infanta Maria, daughter of Philip III. James also wanted the Spanish monarch's help in restoring his son-in-law's position in Bohemia. The marriage never came to pass, much to the relief of most of the British people, who did not want their future

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king to marry a Catholic. He did, anyway, when in 1624 he signed a marriage treaty with Henrietta Maria, the daughter of Henry IV of France. King James died in 1625, and not long afterwards Charles began warring with Spain. But in 1618, when the eruption of violence between Catholics and Protestants occurred in Bohemia, bringing with it a possible intervention from Spain, King James decided that he might be in a position to mediate between the feuding factions. To this end he contacted the King of Spain with an offer to make peace. The King of Spain, in turn, sought the advice of his ex-ambassador to England, the Conde de Gondomar, who replied with considerable candor:

> The vanity of the present King of England is so great that he will always think it of great importance that peace should be made by his means, so that his authority may be increased . . . [nonetheless] it is possible and fitting to accept this mediation, since it cannot do any harm, or make things worse than they would be without it. . . . [T]he King of England should send immediately to Germany an ambassador to treat about it.

Thus the diplomatic mission on which Donne was to serve was born.

To lead what turned out to be an exercise in futility, the King chose James Hay—Lord Doncaster. One historian writes that Doncaster was

> a handsome Scot who by virtue of James I's susceptibility to young males, became one of the leading figures in the court and was created successively Viscount Doncaster and Earl of Carlisle. Hay was best known for his facility in spending large sums of money, and under his guidance the vulgar excess which characterized Jacobean court entertainment reached a new height. A feast which he gave for the French ambassador at Essex House comprised sixteen hundred dishes which it took a hundred cooks eight days to prepare.

Whatever enthusiasm Doncaster might have had for this mission was tempered by the fact that, as the Queen had died in 1619, the entourage was required to wear mourning clothes. Donne had even less enthusiasm. His wife had died in 1617, leaving the surviving children in his care. He felt that he was deserting them. For some reason, Donne decided that he would never return alive from this trip. He wrote letters and preached sermons in the tone of a man condemned. He also announced that he would not be writing letters back to his friends in England. Hence we do not seem to have any record by Donne of his meeting with Kepler. Nonetheless the two men were, Donne above all, in no position to refuse a royal command. Despite the mourning clothes, the mission was an extravagant one. It took more than twenty-five coaches for its ceremonial entry into Brussels. (Ultimately the mission cost about £30,000—the equivalent of $2 mil-

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lion in present currency.) There were lords and knights, a physician and cooks, and, of course, John Donne, who was its chaplain. It meandered its way for some six months until it reached Linz on October 23. From Kepler's letter, which I am about to present, we can't tell who actually came to visit him—Donne alone, or Doncaster and some of his entourage. I would speculate that it was Donne alone. Nothing I have read about Doncaster leads me to believe that he would have had any interest in meeting Johannes Kepler. Furthermore, as far as I can tell, Kepler had no facility in Linz for entertaining such a group. In fact, the letter suggests that Kepler had only seen Doncaster in town from a distance. I would suppose that Kepler and Donne spoke Latin. There is no reason to believe that Kepler knew English or Donne knew German. Until I read the letter, I had hoped that the meeting might have been an epiphany—one of those occasions that changes the destiny of the participants forever. As you will see, it does not seem to have been. Here is the letter in translation. It is addressed to a woman. The German is somewhat rough-hewn and in places not entirely clear. I have chosen what I think are the most plausible interpretations. (I am very grateful to Gerald Holton and Freeman Dyson for their help in translating this letter.)

Noble, much-honorable, virtuous, honorably-beloved sister in law [This is very likely a form of address and not literally a reference to Kepler's sister-in-law. This sort of address must not have been uncommon. When late in life Donne wrote some of his most personal letters to his friend Anne Cokayne, he addressed her as "my noble dear sister"]: I received your letter and report from England a month ago. From it I gathered your and your honorable cousin Burlemachi's favorable efforts and diligence in presenting my work.

The work in question is certainly Kepler's *Harmony of the World*, which he had published in the summer of 1619. His intent was to dedicate the book to King James, in part as a recognition of his role as a peacemaker. Kepler was, no doubt, aware as well that the King's son-in-law Frederick was the protector of the Protestants in Bohemia. But the sheet with the dedication was not delivered until early in 1620—after Donne's visit. By this time, Frederick was in serious trouble and many of the printed copies do not have the dedication.

The letter goes on,

And because I now also reply confidently on the continuation of this promotion, I cannot help reporting again (perhaps my last letter did not get through) that I have talked with a Doctor of Theology named Donne, who was travelling with His Royal Majesty's envoy, Mr. Doncastre [*sic*], and appeared here on October 23. [This would seem to imply that there was another letter dealing with the meeting which may not have been pre-

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served.] I told him that I had ordered the dedication copies [presumably the copies of *Harmony of the World* dedicated to King James], and added that, because I had seen the envoy [Doncaster] here [in Linz], I wanted to ask his Grace to convey and commend the work. Because one could sense that this wish was well-received, and because Mr. D. Donne [*sic*] thought that the envoy would return to court before the presentation [of the dedication] copies, and since this promised every beneficial promotion, I wrote on his advice, a letter in French to Mr. Burleranchi [*sic*]* and gave it to the doctor. In this letter I informed him [Burlemachi] about all this and, in case the presentation [to the King] had not happened yet, asked him to take note of Mr. D. Donne's and the envoy's opinion about it.

But because I have now learned that the envoy will arrive long after the presentation of the work [In fact, the mission did not return to London until January.] I am concerned that my earlier letter might keep Mr. Burlemachi from promoting this work. And because my gracious sister-in-law might have some thoughts about this [promoting my work] I would ask you in the meantime to write letters supporting it, still showing respect to the envoy so that what you do would not be interpreted as fickleness on my part. [I have not translated the last paragraph of the letter, which has to do with the financial aspects of printing the book.]

It seems to me clear from this letter, and from what has gone before, that as far as Kepler was concerned Donne was an appendage to the British mission who could be useful in promoting Kepler's work in England. Of the "Jack Donne" who wrote some of the greatest poetry in the English language he knew nothing—and still less of the Donne who wrote *Ignatius* or who preached upon the tolling of the bell. A year later Sir Henry Wotton, who had been with Donne as a student at Oxford and remained one of his closest friends throughout his life, visited Kepler in Linz. Wotton, who had had a long career as a diplomat in Venice, was temporarily functioning as King James's envoy in Middle Europe. Some years earlier Wotton had been in serious difficulties with the King because, as a joke, he had written, in an album of remembrances belonging to a German friend, "An Ambassador is an honest man, sent to lie abroad for the good of his country." Somehow the King learned of this and was not pleased. In time, Wotton was forgiven and in 1620 came to Linz to suggest that Kepler might consider relocating in England.

My guess is that during his conversation with Donne, Kepler must have conveyed some of his unhappiness in Linz. From the time he

*Professor Applebaum has informed me that "Burleranchi" or "Burlemachi" was a gentleman whose actual name seems to have been Burlemaqui. He was of Italian-Protestant descent but had been naturalized English. He seems to have been a somewhat shady "wheeler-dealer"—he was once fined £10,000 by the Star Chamber—but was used by the Crown in some of its international financial dealings. Kepler appeared to believe that Burlemaqui might be an entre to the King.

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arrived he found himself in conflict with the orthodox Lutherans in the community and was even denied communion. In 1616, there was an attempt to eliminate his job altogether. Nonetheless, when it came to relocating abroad, Kepler could not make himself do it. He stayed in Linz until 1626, when the flames of war literally consumed the city. From that time until his death in 1630, he found no tranquil place where he could do his work.

Johannes Kepler died in Regensburg, Germany, on November 15, 1630. He was buried in the churchyard in front of Peter's Gate. The grave and the churchyard were swept away in the course of the Thirty Years' War. John Donne died some six months later, on March 31, 1631. He was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. A statue in effigy was carved to mark his resting place. Of it his friend Sir Henry Wotton remarked, "It seems to breathe faintly; and, Posterity shall look upon it as a kind of artificial Miracle.

Robert Adams

(1915–1996)

Contributor, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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Old Herr Schmidt

ARTHUR PURDY

Old Herr Schmidt
Delivered ice held in tongs
With a burlap sack on his shoulder
And a burlap sack tied apron-wise
And a black leather cap.
When he came in the back door
He jammed the cap under an armpit.
My mother spoke Yiddish to him
Saying "Ja" in place of Yes
Nodding to the Deutsch he loved to speak.
He would take a glass of tea
Standing by the door
After wiping the floor of ice drippings.
One day after lowering the ice in the box
He wiped the floor and standing at the door
His sagging old man's face red
His grey fringed bald head red
His blue eyes watery
He said, *"Ich bin ein Amerikaner—*
Ich nicht ein Nazi."
"Ja," my mother said, nodding, "Ja."
Before she could reach to touch his arm
He pulled his cap from under it
Put it on his head and went away
Leaving his twenty-cents, his glass of tea.
Old Herr Schmidt.

✪ ARTHUR PURDY is a retired businessman.

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Revolution in the Library

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB

HISTORIANS ARE NOTORIOUSLY WARY of the word *revolution.* Unlike journalists, who find revolutions in every twist and turn of political events, intellectual movements, technological innovations, sartorial fashions, historians like to think that their revolutions last more than a month or two, or a year or two, or even a decade or two. Indeed, some historians, older historians like myself, are so sparing in their use of the word that they reserve it for changes that dramatically alter the course of entire centuries. Thus the Cromwellian revolution in England, complete with the decapitation of the king, is said to be not a serious revolution; at best it was only a civil war. Nor was the so-called Glorious Revolution that altered the succession to the throne; that was entirely too peaceful, too "glorious," to qualify as a revolution.

But there are, even the most cautious historian will agree, genuine revolutions. The French Revolution surely was one such, and probably the American Revolution (although this is still disputed; a colonial revolt, the English prefer to call it). And finally, after decades of indecision, the industrial revolution has been admitted into the pantheon of revolutions. When I was in graduate school, the term *industrial revolution* always appeared in quotation marks to suggest that it was not really a revolution. Today, even the most skeptical of historians agree that it was a real revolution. And having conceded that, some of us are prepared to say that we are now witnessing another revolution, a post-industrial revolution, the electronic revolution. Like all revolutions, this has ramifications far beyond its immediate context. For it may prove to be a revolution not only in the library itself—the way books are catalogued, stored, and circulated—but in the nature of learning and education.

The library is, and always has been, the heart of a college. I recall witnessing a demonstration at a university in the late 1960s, when the students demanded to be "empowered," as they said, and the profes-

✪ GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB's most recent book is *The De-Moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values.* This essay is adapted from a lecture given at Rosemont College in Rosemont, Pennsylvania.

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sors protested, "But *we* are the university." In fact, librarians have as much right to make that claim. For professors—professors of the humanities, at any rate—as much as students, are the creatures of the library. Just as the laboratory is the domain of the sciences, so the library is of the humanities. For it is the library that is the repository of the learning and wisdom that are transmitted from the professors to the students.

If the library is now in the throes of a revolution—if desks and carrels in the library are being transformed into "workstations," and students and scholars find themselves consulting the Internet more often than books—something momentous is happening, something far more consequential than a mere technological innovation. The last time we experienced such an innovation was the invention of the printing press almost half a millennium ago. And that, as we now know, had momentous consequences. Among other things, it was responsible for the creation of libraries. There had been libraries, to be sure, before Gutenberg's invention. The most famous was the library in Alexandria founded by Ptolemy I in the fourth century B.C.—famous partly because of its infamous destruction by the Roman emperors in the third and fourth centuries A.D. But other libraries, public and private, survived and flourished, in Jerusalem, Greece, and Rome. At about the time that Gutenberg was perfecting his printing press, the Vatican Library was formed; its first catalogue listed twenty-five hundred volumes. Today, thanks to Gutenberg, a good many scholars have that many books or more in their home or office.

The print revolution is the perfect exemplar of the principle of quantity transmuted into quality. The quantum leap in the number of books now available to each individual or library is almost the least of the consequences of that revolution. More significant is its democratizing effect—the liberation of the culture from the control of clerics and scribes. The relative ease and cheapness of printing transferred the production of books to artisans and merchants, who were responsible neither to ecclesiastical nor to secular authorities but only to the dictates of the consumer and the market. Thus ephemeral popular books could be produced as cheaply as classical ones, and heretical tracts as readily as canonical ones.

Not only could numerous copies of each book be produced, but they could be produced in identical form. Thus every literate person could have access to the same text of the Bible, and could interpret and judge it without benefit of the mediating authorities of church or state. It is no accident, some historians suggest, that the print revolution preceded the Protestant Reformation; were it not for Gutenberg,

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they say, the Reformation might have petered out or been suppressed as so many medieval heresies were.

Now, with the electronic revolution, we are taking that democratizing process a giant step forward. It is not only the library catalogue that is computerized; the computer can call up a variety of other catalogues, indices, data bases, CD-Roms, the Internet, as well as books, journals, newspapers, archives, even manuscript collections from other libraries. Potentially, at least, the electronic revolution makes even smaller libraries the equivalent of libraries in major research universities and scholarly institutions. And it can do more than that. It can make those books, journals, data bases, and so on, "talk to each other," as cyberspace aficionados say. All you have to do is type in your request for information and the computer will collate the sources, synthesize them, and present the results for you on your screen.

And it can do still more. It can make you not only the recipient of all this information but the creator of it, an active partner in this "interactive process" (another cyberspace term). Your thoughts on any subject, your reflections, impressions, opinions, even your latest term paper, can find their way into the Internet by means of your "home page." Recently I heard a child on TV—an eight or nine year old—exult in the potentialities of this marvelous device. "It's wonderful," he said, "to be able to ask a question on your home page and have lots of people answer it for you." All of the adults on that program shared his enthusiasm. I wonder how many listeners recalled that only a few years ago he would have had to go to a textbook or encyclopedia for the answer to his question—an implicit recognition on his part that these sources were more reliable, more authoritative, than "lots of people."

By this time you will have suspected that I am of two minds about the new electronic revolution. Like a great many revolutions, it is salutary—up to a point. But, like most revolutions, it tends to go beyond that point. The democratization of knowledge is all to the good, if that means the democratization of *access* to knowledge. Anyone who spends a fair amount of time in the library is grateful for a computerized catalogue that gives information not only about the books and journals in that particular library but in all the libraries in the area or even in the country. And anyone who does not have access to a major research library, or who seeks information about a public figure or event in the recent past, or who wants to read or reread a particular book review or article, will be grateful to the Internet for retrieving that information quickly and efficiently.

But democratization of the access to knowledge should not be

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confused with the democratization of knowledge itself. And this is where the Internet, or any system of electronic networking, may be misleading and even pernicious. In cyberspace, every source seems as authoritative as every other. As that child on TV put it, "lots of people" will profess to have the answer to his question. The search for a name or phrase on the Internet will produce a comic strip or advertising slogan as readily as a quotation from the Bible or Shakespeare. The Internet is an equal opportunity resource; it recognizes no rank or status or privilege. In that democratic universe, all sources, all ideas, all theories seem equally valid and pertinent.

It takes a discriminating mind, a mind that is already stocked with knowledge and trained in critical discernment, to distinguish between Peanuts and Shakespeare—between the trivial and the important, the ephemeral and the enduring, the true and the false. It is just this sense of discrimination that the humanities have traditionally cultivated and that they must now cultivate even more strenuously if the electronic revolution is to do more good than bad.

The humanities have had much to contend with in recent years. The real revolution started even before the electronic one, and it started not with a technological revolution but with an intellectual one. It began a few decades ago with the attack on the "canon"—the great books that have traditionally been thought to constitute the heart of the humanities and the core of a liberal education. In the beginning, the criticism was leveled at the particular books in the canon—or, rather, at the authors of the books. Plato and Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, Shakespeare and Milton, Marx and Mill, all were derided as "Dead White Males"—"DWMS" or "Dweems," as they were familiarly known. The canon, it was charged, was sexist, elitist, and regressive, prejudiced against women, against blacks, and against the living.

But that was only the opening skirmish of the war. The attack escalated with an assault against the very idea of a canon. Any canon, the argument went, was objectionable because it was fixed, prescribed, imposed from without—therefore oppressive and authoritarian. When it was pointed out that the canon was not in fact fixed, that it differed from college to college and changed from one year to the next, that some old books were retired while new ones emerged (some by women, blacks, and even, horrors, the living), a new strategy came into play.

I first encountered this new turn of the argument some years ago when I participated in a panel discussion on the subject of the canon at a distinguished liberal arts college. One of the panelists, the head of the Women's Studies program at the college, explained that the prob-

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lem was not only that the "Big Guys"—her variation on "Dead White Males"—were Guys, but also that they were Big, thus "privileging," as she put it, big books, great books. This, she complained, was what was really offensive in the canon. The canon—any canon—assumes that there is such a thing as great books containing great and enduring ideas and truths worthy of being studied and valued. Moreover, it assumes that these ideas and truths transcend time and place, race and ethnicity, class and gender, country and nationality. These assumptions, she said, are not only elitist; they are profoundly sexist, for they reflect a distinctively masculine view of how people think and feel, a masculine conception of ideas and reason. She concluded by calling upon women, and feminists particularly, to repudiate this masculine sensibility and adopt a uniquely feminine one, which celebrates not great ideas and truths but "the little things in women's lives . . . , the small nurturing things that women do."

I was taken aback by this argument when I first heard it. I could only protest that a retreat to "the little things in women's lives" is not my idea of what feminism is all about; it sounds to me suspiciously like a retreat to the kitchen. Nor do I agree that great books and ideas are distinctively masculine; nor that they are at all elitist. On the contrary, I believe them to be distinctively human and eminently democratic. They have survived the ages precisely because they are accessible to people of different backgrounds and characters, all of whom can aspire to understand them and to be elevated by them. This has been the principle inspiring the humanities, and, indeed, the very idea of a liberal education.

Since that episode, this challenge, not only to the canon but to the humanities and liberal education, has become all too familiar, and not only on the part of feminists. It is now espoused in a more sophisticated form by literary critics, philosophers, historians, and others under the banner of postmodernism, a doctrine that has become extremely influential, in some cases dominant, on many campuses and in many disciplines.

The mainspring of postmodernism is a radical—an absolute, one might say—relativism, skepticism, and subjectivism that rejects not only the idea of the canon, and not only the idea of greatness, but the very idea of truth. For the postmodernist, there is no truth, no knowledge, no objectivity, no reason, and, ultimately, no reality. Nothing is fixed, nothing is permanent, nothing is transcendent. Everything is in a state of total relativity and perennial flux. There is no correspondence between language and reality; indeed, there is no "essential" reality. What appears to be real is illusory, deceptive, problematic, indeterminate. What appears to be true is nothing more than what the

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power structure, the "hegemonic" authority in society, deems to be true.

To those of you who have been happily spared this latest intellectual fashion, it may seem bizarre and improbable. I can only assure you that it is all too prevalent in all fields of the humanities. This is not to say that all or even most professors of literature, history, or philosophy are postmodernists. But some of the most prestigious professors are, including the recent presidents of several important professional associations. And many of the brightest and most ambitious younger professors and graduate students are attracted to a mode of thought that they believe to be at the "cutting edge," the "vanguard" of their disciplines. More important is the fact that even those who do not think of themselves as postmodernists often share the extreme relativism and subjectivism that now pervade the humanities as a whole. In the leading professional journals today, the words "truth," "objectivity," "reason," and "reality" generally appear with quotation marks around them, suggesting how specious these concepts are.

What we are now confronting, therefore, is not one but two revolutions—an intellectual and a technological revolution which bear an uncanny resemblance to each other and have a symbiotic relationship to each other. If I were given to conspiratorial theories, I might speculate that Bill Gates, the chairman of Microsoft, is a secret agent of Jacques Derrida, the high priest of postmodernism. For the new technology is the perfect medium for the new ideology. Surfing through cyberspace is a truly postmodernist experience, a liberation from what the postmodernist calls "linear thinking"—a logical, rational mode of reasoning.

Words and images appear on the screen in rapid succession and in no predetermined or logical order. The reader, or rather viewer, patches them together as he likes, making of them what he will, connecting and disconnecting them at his pleasure. There is no fixed text, no authoritative source, no restrictions of space or time to confine him. (Compare the infinite capacity of the moving screen with the physical, spatial limitations of the book; or the speed of scrolling on the screen with turning the pages of a book.)

Another of the buzzwords of postmodernism is *intertextuality*—intruding into the text of a poem, for example, any words, ideas, or events, however remote or contradictory, that may come to the mind of the reader. The screen enormously facilitates such intertexuality, as it calls up other texts or images that may not even have occurred to the reader and that may have little or no bearing on the poem. The poem becomes, in the language of postmodernism, indeterminate,

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problematic, ironic. And the reading of the poem becomes, in effect, an exercise in Virtual Reality, having as little relation to the real poem as an electronic game of Virtual Reality has to the real world.

We are experiencing, then, a revolution, not only in library services but in the very conception of the library. And, like most revolutions, this one has enormous potentialities for good and bad. Among its undeniable virtues are the computerized catalogue, so much more efficient and informative than the old card catalogue; the ready access to other library holdings and data bases; the ability to retrieve rapidly information and material that otherwise would have taken days or would have been irrecoverable; the convenience of networking with colleagues working on similar subjects, exchanging ideas, information, and, let us admit it, the kind of professional and even personal gossip that goes with the trade.

But—and this is a large *but*—all this will be to the good only if the virtues of the new library are made to complement, rather than supplant, those of the old. And I am confident this can be done, although it will take a conscious effort to do it—to resist the seductions of the new medium, to refrain from mindless, endless cybersurfing, to withstand the tempting distractions along the way, to retain a sense of what is important, pertinent, and authoritative. Above all, it will mean keeping faith with the old library—with books that are meant to be read, not merely surfed. E-mail enthusiasts refer to postal mail as "snail-mail." Some books, to be sure, are better surfed ("skimmed," as we used to say) than read. But others should only be read at a snail's pace; anything faster than that defeats the purpose and violates the text.

This brings me to the heart of the matter—to the particular relationship between the library and the humanities. In theory, there is no reason why Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Rousseau's *Social Contract* cannot be called up on the screen, assuming they are "on line." (What is more likely is that something like a *Cliffs Notes* version of them is on line.) But even if they are on line, there is every reason to read them in book form—"hard copy," as we now say—rather than on the screen. With the physical volume in our hand, we are necessarily aware of the substantiality, the reality of the work, the text as it is, as Milton or Rousseau wrote it and meant us to read it. Of course, we will interpret and understand it within our own framework of reference; and of course we will draw upon other sources—critical, historical, biographical—to help us interpret and understand it. But we should always be brought back to the text, to the book in hand. The book is the reality; there is no Virtual Reality here. Moreover, each page of the book—in the case of a difficult work, each line of the page—has a distinctness, a

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hard reality of its own. Holding the book in hand, open at that page, it is easy to concentrate the mind upon it, to linger over it, mull over it, take as long as necessary to try to understand and appreciate it.

Reading it on the screen, however, is a quite different experience. There we tend to become postmodernists in spite of ourselves. It takes a great effort of will to concentrate on the text unaccompanied by whatever else may happen to be called up on the screen along with it. And it takes a still greater effort to remain fixed on a single page without scrolling on to the next, let alone to concentrate on a single passage, line, or word. The medium itself is too fluid, too mobile and volatile, to encourage any sustained effort of thought. It makes us impatient, eager to get on to the next visual presentation. And the more accustomed we become to the new medium, the more difficult it is to retain the old habits of study and thought. We become habituated to a fast pace, an ever-changing scene, a rapid succession of sensations and impressions. We become incapacitated for the longer, slower, less feverish tempo of the book.

We also become incapacitated for thinking seriously about ideas rather than amassing facts. For the purpose of retrieving facts, the Internet is enormously helpful, although even here some caveats are in order. We need to concentrate our mind on exactly what it is we want to know, to resist being distracted by fascinating but irrelevant facts, and—most important—to retain the ability to distinguish between facts and opinions, between reputable sources and dubious ones. The humanities, however, is about more than the retrieval of facts. It is also about appreciating a poem, understanding an idea, finding significance in a historical event, following the logic of an argument, reasoning about human nature, inquiring into ethical dilemmas, making rational and moral judgments—all of which require an exercise of mind that calls upon all the human faculties, and which no technology, however sophisticated, can satisfy. If we want, for example, a concordance to the Bible, we can find no better medium than the Internet. But if we want to read the Bible, to study it, think about it, reflect upon it, we should have it in our hands, for that is the only way of getting it into our minds and our hearts.

The humanities are an essentially human enterprise—an enterprise to which human beings have devoted themselves for all of civilized history. The record of that enterprise reposes in the library in the form of books—a vast multitude of books, including, to be sure, many worthless or meretricious ones, but also all the great ones. These are the books that sustain our mind and inspire our imagination. It is there that we look for truth, for knowledge, for wisdom. And it is these ideals that we hope will survive our latest revolution.

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Karl Popper

A Memoir

JOHN WATKINS

KARL POPPER was born in Vienna on July 28, 1902, and died on September 17, 1994. His *Logik der Forschung*, published in 1934, was brought to the attention of Einstein, who thought highly of it. Popper visited England in 1936 and took up a post in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1937. From 1938 on he was working on "The Poverty of Historicism" and *The Open Society*. In 1943, "Fritz" Hayek organized an invitation to him to a readership at The London School of Economics. When Popper arrived in London in January 1946, he was much sought after. For instance, he was almost immediately slotted into a symposium at the annual Joint Session in July 1946 with Casimir Lewy, and with Gilbert Ryle, who gave Popper's *The Open Society* a glowing review in the April 1947 issue of *Mind*. Popper had sent a complimentary copy of his book to Bertrand Russell, recently reinstalled in Trinity College, Cambridge, and in July 1946 he asked him to recommend it to the American publishers of Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy*, then on the American best-seller list. Russell presumably hadn't read it, for he replied that, having no house at present, his books were inaccessible, so could he be lent a copy? This time he did read it—and he was bowled over. He recommended it strongly to his publisher, and gave Popper a testimonial, calling the book a work of first-class importance.

I went to a lecture by Russell, "Philosophy and Politics," in London in October 1946, in the course of which he said that the case against Plato "has been brilliantly advocated in a recent book by Dr. K. R. Popper." He invited Popper to tea on the afternoon of October 25 before the famous meeting of the Moral Science Club that Wittgenstein was to preside over, poker in hand. Russell wrote afterwards to Popper: "I was entirely on your side throughout, but I did not take a

✪ JOHN WATKINS was a pupil of Popper's, then a colleague, and eventually Popper's successor at The London School of Economics. He is the author of *Science and Scepticism* and *Hobbes's System of Ideas*.

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larger part in the debate because you were so fully competent to fight your own battle."

I came to LSE as a student in October 1946, but a year went by before a fellow student told me it was worth going to Dr. Popper's lectures "to hear," as he put it, "the great man thinking aloud." I went, and I was riveted. Popper had no notes or other paraphernalia. Ideas seemed to flow from him. His combination of seriousness and lucidity had an almost hypnotic persuasiveness. There were happy improvisations and touches of humor. I remember an occasion when he was discussing whether the hypothesis "All men are mortal" is falsifiable. Suppose we encounter a man who has so far survived all attempts to kill him; eventually an atom bomb is exploded beneath him, but he descends smilingly to earth, brushing the dust off. This much, I believe, Popper had prepared beforehand. But then came a pause, a sudden smile, a new thought. "We ask him how he does it and he answers: 'Oh, it's easy; I'm immortal.'" His audiences grew until we were eventually filling the New Theatre. Popper said in his autobiography that LSE in those days was a marvelous institution.

But would it make Karl Popper a professor? That he was worthy of a chair is indicated by an invitation he received at around this time from the University of Vienna to take up the chair previously occupied by Ernst Mach and Moritz Schlick. He declined. (When Rudolph Carnap had asked him whether he would consider going back to Vienna if offered a position there, he had answered, "No, never!") There was also interest in Popper at Cambridge. In October 1947, a year after the Moral Science Club meeting, Richard Braithwaite wrote to him: "You will doubtless be interested to hear that Wittgenstein has resigned from the Chair of Philosophy"; and he kept him briefed about dates of meetings of the university electors. But there was also opposition. Cambridge University Press had turned down *The Open Society*. The senior professor there was C. D. Broad, who was interested in paranormal phenomena. Popper attended a meeting in which the speaker claimed that it would be an ostrich-like policy to ignore the mounting evidence for such phenomena. In the discussion Popper rose to "say a word in favour of the ostrich." He came to think that this had spoiled his chances. The chair went to Broad's friend Georg von Wright.

There had been proposals to create a chair for Popper at LSE, but these ran into the difficulty that there was no philosophy degree or department. It would have to be a personal title. Matters were brought to a head by a cable from Dunedin, where John Eccles was working to bring him back to New Zealand, reiterating a call to the chair of philosophy at Otago University. Popper consulted Hayek who brought

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in Lionel Robbins. The School was not supposed to act under the duress of outside offers; Robbins drafted a letter for Popper to copy out and send to the Director. Within a week it had done the trick. As a professor, his salary would be nearly doubled. (He was under the impression that an LSE precedent had been created by this conferment of a personal professorship; in fact it had happened before, for instance, in the case of R. H. Tawney.)

With most people, Popper automatically achieved a strong ascendancy, but some people, chief among them Robbins, brought out a deferential streak in him. When Robbins many years later, as Chairman of the Trustees of the Covent Garden Opera House, had invited Popper to join his party in the royal box, he added that, unfortunately, a dinner jacket is essential. Popper had a very good reason to decline this particular invitation, as we will see. But for him it was like a royal command. Julius Kraft once said to me that in the Popper household "cooking an egg causes a great deal of excitement." Acquiring suitable evening wear caused even more excitement. Urgent appeals went out for advice and assistance. On the day in question, I drove the Poppers to Ernst Gombrich's home, where he changed. Eventually the bow tie was fixed and everything seemed in place. But there was one last adjustment: Popper stuffed his ears with cotton wool! The opera was by Richard Strauss, whose music he could not abide!

In his lectures, Popper encouraged questions. I wasn't shy about raising them and he noticed me. I daresay he felt a little lonely; he would sometimes ask me along for supper after his evening lecture. I found him as friendly and approachable as could be. I was always wanting to talk about such things as the objectivity of evil, but he usually preferred to talk instead about such things as the errors of the Attlee government or the evils of the USSR. I remember him being shocked by cases of people (such as Alex Weissberg and Margarete Buber-Neumann) who, when Hitler came to power, took refuge in the USSR only to be caught up in the Stalin purges and then, after the Pact, handed back to the Nazis. I had started up a political philosophy club, and he was very helpful, giving a talk to it himself and coming to talks by Michael Polanyi and Michael Oakeshott, though I doubt whether his sharp criticisms endeared him to either man. Polanyi may have felt a touch of envy when Popper exuberantly told him that he had been invited to give the William James Lectures at Harvard at "Hollywood rates" (ten lectures at $600 per lecture).

In my third year at LSE I started attending Popper's seminar. It was an exhilarating and often alarming experience. I was amazed by the quickness of his mind. But in one respect he was slow and pedantic. In January 1949 I sought testimonials from him and also from Harold

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Laski, who was the head of the department I was in. Laski dashed off a nice one. Popper wrote his, but then found something not quite right and wrote another. Then the question arose as to whether "To Whom It May Concern" should not be "To whom it may concern," and a third version was written. I was witnessing Popper's tendency to revise whatever he wrote. He told me he had written *The Open Society* thirty times, whereas Russell wrote straight off without correction. Then he asked me about Laski.

Laski had been chosen in 1943 as a publisher's reader for *The Open Society* and was enthusiastic about it. But certain tendencies in the two men must have worked against easy relations between them. Laski, for instance, advocated fast reading (he set students a target of one hundred pages an hour), while Popper advocated slow, critical reading. Relations between them can't have been helped by an evening newspaper report to the effect that Popper was supplanting Laski as the students' hero. Popper told me that he had read only one book of Laski's, his *Locke to Bentham*, and this offended against all the ethics of writing. It was superior, allusive, intellectual snobbery. Yet the man he'd met was honest and straightforward. In April 1950, shortly after Laski died, Popper came over from Harvard to Yale, where I now had a fellowship, to give the Woodward Lecture. He said he was really sorry and worried; LSE badly needed someone like Laski.

Brand Blanshard, the senior philosopher at Yale, took me with him to the railway station to identify Popper. In the car he asked whether Popper was Jewish; I felt stupid at not knowing the answer. (The correct answer would have been that he was of Jewish extraction, but his parents were assimilated, having converted to Christianity before he and his two sisters were born. He had no religious faith.) Popper was full of enthusiasm for things American. He said, for instance, that while Negroes (this word was politically correct then) were admittedly a depressed class, they were the least depressed depressed class in the world. At lunch he said that several postgraduate students at Harvard had done work that not only could but should be published. Then the conversation turned to the virtual impossibility of meeting the requirements for a D.Phil. in Oxford before the war. One of the examiners for it was quoted as saying that *he* could never have passed it. Then surely, I chipped in, he was not competent to be an examiner? Popper's and other heads shook in unison. As Peter Hempel put it: "A good art critic need not be a good artist."

After lunch I was to take care of Popper until his lecture at four o'clock. He was bursting with ideas and talking non-stop. Then he said that he wanted to bathe his feet for the beneficial effect this would have on his brain. I wasn't convinced that his brain needed additional

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stimulation, but I took him to the bathroom near my room in Silliman College. He emerged in due course, his trouser legs rolled up, to put on his socks and shoes. As he talked, one trouser leg came down. I made a mental note to point out, as soon as there was a pause, that the other was still up. The matter assumed a certain urgency when we emerged into the street; but there he was immediately grabbed by Blanshard, who bore him off to be given his check. I walked on to the lecture hall trying to persuade myself that surely someone would tell him. But when he appeared my forebodings were fulfilled. It would not have been so bad if he had stood quietly behind the lectern, but he strode excitedly about the platform. I took in little of what he said; try as I would to avert it, my gaze kept reverting to that expanse of bare leg. And there was the dreadful possibility that he would use a standard ploy of his, which was to ask the audience to take pencil and paper, *observe*, and write down what they observed. They usually asked *what* they were to observe, thereby bringing out the priority of theories over observations; but this time they wouldn't need to ask. After supper Hempel and I went with him to the station. When he climbed aboard the train that trouser leg was still rolled up.

The next day I started asking around whether anything wrong had been found with the lecture. Lots had. Popper had been unfair to Locke, was one verdict. Adolf Grünbaum said that he had got Gödel wrong. "Yes, yes," I would interrupt, "but did you notice anything wrong apart from things he said?" I gradually came to realize, to my amazement and relief, that *no one had noticed*—a striking testimony to the attention-arresting quality of Popper's lecturing.

At Princeton he gave a seminar talk that both Einstein and Bohr attended. In the discussion Bohr rather took over; he went on and on until in the end the room contained just him at the blackboard and Einstein and Popper as his entire audience. Popper told me that Einstein whispered, "He's mad."

The money Popper earned from the William James lectures enabled him to buy a beautiful home, "Fallowfield" in Penn near High Wycombe, and to install a Bechstein piano.

I said that Popper was much sought after when he came to LSE. But that changed. Medawar reported an occasion on which Popper, who had been putting in for professorial chairs without success, asked him to tell him "with the utmost frankness whether there was anything about his manner or behavior or reputation that stood in the way of his receiving the advancement he sought." Here is an entry from my diary from May 1951 (I was now a junior colleague of his, having returned to LSE as an assistant lecturer in political science in October 1950):

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Popper drew me into his room one afternoon, and told me he was very dissatisfied with his relations with staff and students—only his relation with me seemed good. I told him that he bullied and awed people . . .

I think that my advantage was that I was not afraid of him, whereas many other people found his powerful presence nervous-making and oppressive. He once chided Imre Lakatos for underestimating the impact he, Lakatos, had on people. He had a point there, but one he could equally have applied to himself. Another factor was Popper's complete inability to dissemble his feelings: when he was happy they shone out, and when he was angry they blazed out. And without saying anything, he could deflate an inflated ego with a flashing look of contempt. Nor did he endear himself to those people he accused of plagiarism.

But Popper also excited affectionate admiration. When a personal professorship was conferred on him, one was also conferred on a Mr. K. B. Smellie, or KB as this lovable person was usually known. I had persuaded a BBC director to invite Popper to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Kant's death, and KB and I agreed that he had done it beautifully. I hope this entry from my diary doesn't sound too effusive:

KB wanted to know what sort of *person* he is. I said that there are barriers—he never relaxes, either dominates or is silent. But a really *good* man, enormously kind and moral. KB has a humility which is really rather beautiful. Of course he jokes about KRP, e.g. his devastating interventions at the Academic Board when, after a careful compromise formula has been evolved, he enunciates some devastating main principle. But, KB added ingenuously, "he is a genius, isn't he?" "*I* think so" I replied.

As the reference to the Academic Board indicates, Popper's allergy to smoke had not yet turned him into the recluse he later became. Although never what you would call a clubbable person, in those early days at LSE he quite often had lunch in the Senior Common Room, where Robbins often joined us. He ate frugally. In those days we had waitress service, and I would sometimes order "The same as Professor Popper, please, but with roast beef." But sometime in the mid-1950s he made it a rule to avoid smoky places.

He had a soft spot for animals. Around this time the Popper home was adopted by a marmalade-colored cat whom they called Chunky. The cat had made a shrewd choice: she was fed on calves' liver and Popper's attitude toward her was infinitely indulgent. When she jumped up on his desk and walked on his manuscript, she was greeted with not even the gentlest push but only a loving "O Chunky, why do

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you persecute us so?" Once he found her playing with a mouse. This caused him a painful dilemma: she would be deeply hurt and offended if he deprived her of her plaything, but the mouse would be even more distressed if he did not. As a negative utilitarian he felt obliged to put the mouse out of its misery; doing so caused him much distress.

Popper's was not the only seminar in London with an alarming reputation. There was also "Freddie" Ayer's University College seminar where, it was said, rapidity of fire was more important than accuracy of aim. At Popper's seminar the paper was not always torn to shreds, but things did sometimes go badly wrong, especially if the paper-giver became, under Popper's insistent interventions, nervous and defensive or, worse still, surreptitiously shifted position, thereby provoking Popper's fury. An American visitor once protested that it was like the House Un-American Activities Committee.

In 1954 Julius Kraft became a regular attender at the seminar. He was about five years older than Popper. They had met in Vienna before the war. He, too, was a philosopher and a pianist and of Jewish extraction. They lost touch until, in 1946, Popper read in an American paper a review article by Kraft of *The Open Society*. Kraft had now moved to London where, among other things, he launched the journal *Ratio*. He was sometimes incensed by Popper's handling of the seminar. After one such occasion, he telephoned to apprise me of the results of research he had been doing into the frequency with which the word *I* occurs in *The Open Society*. I forget his figure, but it was high. Yet a high *I* rate does not necessarily betoken egomania. Darwin, who was no egomaniac, was somewhat chagrined when a correspondent pointed out that the word *I* occurs thirteen times on the opening page of *The Origin of Species*.

Popper's interventions, considered in themselves and apart from any distress they might cause, were usually striking. One that I recall came after the speaker had advanced the thesis that reforms to the educational system should aim at enabling children to maximize their potential. Popper brushed this aside; a good reform would, for example, be one that allowed schoolteachers who had come to hate children to move out without financial loss into, say, the post office. I think that a poll of those who attended his seminar over the years would show a majority preferring it to be run in the rather outrageous way he ran it.

I regard the years when he was writing *The Open Society* as Popper's most heroic period. For his happiest period, apart from its health problems, I nominate the decade from, say, 1955 to 1965. Invitations streamed in for him to give important public lectures both in this

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country and abroad, or to contribute a chapter to such books as *Contemporary British Philosophy* and *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*, and he always rose to the occasion. In 1958 the department began teaching for a new Philosophy and Economics degree, in connection with which a new readership was created that I moved into. Lakatos joined us in 1960. Popper's *Logic of Scientific Discovery* was published in 1959 and immediately became a landmark in Anglo-American philosophy of science. *Conjectures and Refutations* came out in 1963.

Popper now had a considerable following of gifted pupils, and his relations with them, give or take an occasional hiccup, were generally happy during most of this period. For instance, he wrote from Berkeley in May 1962 to Herbert Feigel: "First the great news: Paul [Feyerabend] has got his promotion to a Full Professorship here! This is a great success indeed: he is only 38!" After visiting Hong Kong in 1963 he wrote to Lakatos that Joseph Agassi "has done extremely well as a Head of Department—it is a wonderful department." In August 1964 he wrote to Lakatos from Canberra: "I love this paper of yours ["Proofs and Refutations"], and I have recommended it to many people the world over. It is a flawless piece of art, and the greatest advent in the philosophy of mathematics since the great logical discoveries around 1930–32." There were combustible elements in some of these relations, as we shall see, but the rifts lay well in the future.

And honors were coming in. In December 1962, he wrote to Lakatos from Minnesota:

> Dear Imre,
>
> It is very embarrassing that I have to tell you such a thing, but as, I suppose, you will prefer to hear from me direct rather than from another source, I better tell you quite frankly and openly to your face that . . . (I hope you are thoroughly frightened by this time) . . . I am about to receive an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from the University of Chicago.

His actual receipt of this degree was a bit alarming. He missed the convocation as a result of what may have been a heart attack, and the president of the university came to the hospital to award it to him there. Near the end of this period there occurred another happy event; he reported to Lakatos: "The postman brought a letter 'On Her Majesty's Service.' Hennie thought 'Income Tax.' When she opened it she got a terrible shock. . . . She first got me to bed, and only then showed it to me." It was from Buckingham Palace offering a knighthood.

Around January 1955 Popper was in a state of exultation over his contribution to the Schilpp volume on Carnap. He believed it to be totally annihilating. He also campaigned, in the middle and late

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1950s, against Carnap over the philosophical problem of confirmation. I rather suspect that there were extra-philosophical factors behind his deep-seated animus toward Carnap's philosophy. Giant slaying was a motif in Popper's intellectual life, and while Carnap was not in the same league as Plato, Hegel, Marx, or Freud, he was a formidable figure in post-war Anglo-American philosophy. It's even possible that his being over six feet tall and Popper's being short had something to do with it. Or it may have been the contrast in their status back in the early 1930s, when Carnap was a professor and Popper was a schoolteacher. After they emigrated, in 1936–37, Popper found himself virtually isolated in New Zealand while Carnap was hobnobbing with Russell, Tarski, and Quine in America.

Carnap had kept up a friendly correspondence with Popper in New Zealand, sending him copies of his own books, and helping, along with Hempel and others, to have issues of *The Journal of Symbolic Logic* sent him. He was very appreciative of *The Open Society.* But he balked at one thing in it—its acknowledgment to Hayek. Carnap had not, at this time, read *The Road to Serfdom,* but he was an old-style socialist and from what he heard it seemed that Hayek was a reactionary. He challenged Popper on these matters and a considerable discussion followed during 1946–47.

The story of their relationship has a happy ending. In 1964 Lakatos was in America recruiting distinguished participants for the colloquium he was organizing to be held at Bedford College, London, under the auspices of LSE and the British Society for the Philosophy of Science. Carnap at first declined, fearing "emotional outbursts." But Lakatos had a persuasive way, and Carnap eventually consented. Popper had been unenthusiastic about the colloquium proposal, but once it had been decided upon, he supported it wholeheartedly. He agreed to give the opening address. He persuaded Thomas Kuhn not to withdraw, promising to chair the Kuhn session himself. And he obeyed Lakatos's strict injunction to be on his very best behavior toward Carnap. He and Hennie met Carnap at the airport and I drove them to Bedford College. When Carnap's bed there turned out to be too short, Popper got it changed.

It was arranged that I should bring Carnap and Quine, together with Grover Maxwell and Wolfgang Yourgrau, to tea with the Poppers on July 15th. We planned to set off at 2:15. When Quine got to the car and found that Carnap was not yet there, he hurried off, saying that he would be back soon. When Carnap got to the car and found that Quine was not yet there, he hurried off, saying that he would be back soon. We eventually set off at least ten minutes late. Carnap said: "Let us discuss the future of logic," which we did. At some point during the

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discussion, I began to realize that I had taken a wrong turning; this caused at least another ten minutes' delay. Then Carnap said that it was necessary for him to put drops in his eyes, and that this meant lying horizontal for ten minutes. So we stopped in a lay-by. The car must have looked an odd sight with Carnap's long legs protruding out of it. When we eventually arrived at Fallowfield, Popper was in a great state of anxiety. My car was an elderly but still quite powerful Jaguar, which I was erroneously reputed to drive too fast; as the minutes had dragged by, Popper had become fully persuaded that the worst had happened.

Conversation was a bit sticky at first. Shaving was discussed. (Being a woman's college, Bedford's bedrooms had no electric shaver outlets.) Popper advanced the thesis that electric razors are *far* superior. Carnap mentioned that his chin had a sensitive patch allergic to electric razors, whereupon Popper withdrew his thesis *unreservedly* with respect to such cases. Over tea it turned out that Carnap and Popper, unlike Einstein, had both resolved, upon emigrating, to switch to English as the language in which to *think* as well as write. Then the conversation turned to Gödel. Popper mentioned a paradox he had presented in the second edition of *The Open Society* to refute the suggestion that the familiar paradoxes could be disposed of by the introduction, besides Box 1 for true statements and Box 2 for false statements, of a Box 3 for pseudo-statements. It relies on Gödel's second theorem, according to which the consistency of a system cannot be asserted within the system. Into which box should go the statement "0=1 cannot be derived from the set of statements in Box 1"? If put into Box 1, then 0=1 *would* be derivable. But if it's not put into Box 1 it can't go into Box 3, or Box 2, since it is meaningful, and true. Carnap and Quine became engrossed by this and were still working over it when we got back to Bedford College.

After the colloquium, Carnap wrote to Lakatos: "The whole conference was very enjoyable and stimulating. In addition, I was deeply moved by Popper's personal kindness in coming together with his wife to the airport to welcome me; and likewise when we visited him in Fallowfield, the whole atmosphere was very pleasant."

A word now about Tarski, who ranked in Popper's eyes with Einstein and Russell. Popper had made Tarski's new theory of truth the subject on which he lectured at Bedford College in 1936. One can get the impression that within the Vienna Circle the importance of Tarski's difficult work was immediately appreciated. Karl Menger ran a "mathematical colloquium" to which, at different times, he invited both Popper and Tarski to give papers. He told me some forty years later that when he took Tarski along to the seminar room they found

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it empty. A new date was fixed, and he managed to rustle up an audience of five or six. Perhaps Popper was one of them; he spoke of being given tutorials by Tarski in Vienna, in the park near the university, in 1935.

We were curious to know whether Tarski reciprocated Popper's esteem for him. Tarski remarked privately that he was inclined to think that Popper had the better of the Popper-Carnap dispute, but the people on the other side were much nicer. He found Popper "Victorian" (Tarski had something of a reputation as a womanizer). But I suspect that the root cause of the antipathy was Popper's horror of tobacco smoke and Tarski's compulsive smoking. At the colloquium the No Smoking signs were continually going up or down according to the latest intelligence about the movements of these two men.

The years either side of Popper's retirement in 1969 were less happy. For one thing, he found that the then superannuation arrangements would leave him poor. And then there were the LSE "Troubles." After the "gates" were brought down with pickaxes by students on January 24, 1969, the School was closed for a time, but committees still met and telephones rang more than ever. Minds were distracted, nerves frayed, and tempers often short. Out at Fallowfield, Popper took time off from the intellectual autobiography he was composing for the Schilpp volume on his philosophy to give thought to the drafting of a statement to be issued by the School that would allow it to re-open without loss of face. I fear that I offended him by dismissing it impatiently on seeing that it wrongly assumed that the gates protected student files.

Popper's behavior became a bit erratic. He once, for instance, rearranged the seminar program at short notice, substituting himself for the advertised speaker, not in order to give a paper but only to answer questions. The questions were not very good because the seminar had not been warned to prepare any, and there had to be a lot of repetition of them because Popper's hearing aid did not work well. He had told me that he didn't want to "do a Ginsberg" after he retired (Morris Ginsberg, Professor of Sociology at LSE, had stayed on as a part-time teacher for a good many years after retirement). I directed my effort to helping to secure research and secretarial assistance for him.

Popper's hostility to Lakatos was later to become so implacable that people tend to assume that it was always like that. In fact, the rift, which can be dated with precision, occurred one month after Popper retired. Any colleague of either one of these two strong personalities was in for an exhilarating but bumpy ride, and this effect was compounded for them as each other's colleague. But the flare-ups usually

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died down quickly. During 1969 Popper was mainly working on the Schilpp volume. Only when the intellectual autobiography was written would he turn to the critical essays and start composing replies. To supplement his pension he had undertaken to teach at Brandeis that autumn. He was working on the autobiography into the early hours of the day when he and Hennie flew out, desperately trying to finish it. Upon arrival there were medical tests and further delays while they looked for a house, and he posted the final corrections on October 7. He then turned to the critical essays. He began with mine and I may perhaps mention that he told me he was "really happy about it."

On October 9, Lakatos, who was at Boston University, came over to give a lecture at Brandeis. Popper afterward wrote him a friendly letter beginning: "My dear Imre, It was very nice to have seen you here." And then, on October 30, he wrote him a furious letter, calling him a whipper-snapper who was snapping his whip at him. That flare-up was sparked by a brief look at Lakatos's contribution to *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, an anthology on Kuhn. There was much worse to come when he turned to Lakatos's essay for the Schilpp volume. Popper had asked him to make this a summary of his various criticisms, scattered in various publications that Popper had not read, of Popper's philosophy. The result was a bombshell. Lakatos argued that Popper's "solutions" to his two fundamental problems both fail; his demarcation criterion fails to distinguish Newton's theory from Freud's, and his treatment of induction leaves us with no reason for preferring to reach the ground by lift rather than by jumping from a window. Popper's reply makes uncomfortable reading. A war was on. And then, just when the Schilpp volume was eventually published, Lakatos suddenly died on February 2, 1974.

I hesitated here, but to hush up the fact that there was a rift between Popper and myself would have been disingenuous, and also futile since it is in the public domain, with references to it in print. (There is even a photographic record of it: in January 1983 we were both at a conference in Turin, and in a crowded corridor he stormed at me with the paparazzi's flashlights flashing all round us.) So I will describe briefly, and from my point of view, what happened. When Lakatos died, Feyerabend, who had been in cahoots with him, was left to carry on their anti-Popperian war alone. I was on the other side, and took it as a compliment when Feyerabend called me "the stern janitor of the Popperian temple." My motto when I was writing my book *Science and Scepticism* might have been "More Catholic than the Pope." Whereas Lakatos had put in a "plea to Popper for a whiff of inductivism," I wanted to purify Popper's philosophy of certain linger-

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ing traces of inductivism that I detected in it. And there were some other matters, for instance his treatment of the empirical basis, which seemed to me to need putting right.

I sent Popper the typescript as soon as it was finished, at about the time of his eightieth birthday, in 1982. It was not a good birthday present. One evening in October he telephoned and, after reading out a sentence of mine in a fraught voice, hissed, "It's a lie," and hung up. I was shocked, and also bewildered because this sentence is clearly true (I let it stand). That little three-letter word had a deadening effect. I wasn't angry; he was caring for Hennie, who had been terminally ill for some years; and not long after this, in 1985, he took her back to Vienna to die. But when he returned to England I was content to look on admiringly from afar, as heads of state sought him out, and he made two flights (as a passenger) in gliders from an airfield behind his new house, and honors and prizes were heaped upon him.

It is a human failing to allow an unhappy development late in a friendship to cast a retrospective blight over memories of it in earlier times. I try to resist this. And I will conclude with a few general remarks on my old friend and teacher as I knew him earlier.

Popper's being a workaholic sometimes posed problems for me. In 1957 he was at the Center for Behavioral Studies in Palo Alto working on the *Postscript* to *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. He mailed me each chapter as he finished it, and I sent him suggestions about changes. As usual, Hennie was doing the typing. From their letters it sounded as though they were both working themselves into a breakdown. In May he sent me the concluding chapter, the Metaphysical Epilogue, some of which I found very obscure. Problem: should I soft-pedal my criticism or risk precipitating a breakdown? I chose the second alternative and sent him a lot of untrammeled criticism. He told me that he worked on these "in a trance-like state" through until the following morning. His correspondence is peppered with reports of poor health, including attacks of tachycardia and pneumonia. I think that these were mainly the result of overwork, often compounded by hypochondria, and sometimes by real illness. In 1959 he feared that he would go blind, but that was halted by an operation on his eyes in Vienna in 1960. He mostly worked on through illnesses.

In his childhood Popper had been shocked by the sight of a drunken man falling under the wheels of a horse-drawn carriage. This gave him a horror of alcohol. To my knowledge he touched alcohol only once in his life, when to his dismay he discovered that what he had supposed to be apple juice was in fact cider. The bottle was stowed away and brought out on my next visit. I used to believe myself to be the only visitor to Fallowfield ever to have been served alcoholic re-

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freshment; I was rather miffed to learn from David Miller that he had once been given a glass of claret.

Popper had a remarkable ability to interest natural scientists in his ideas. When he gave the Sherman lectures at University College London in 1961, a count was made of the Nobel Laureates and Fellows of the Royal Society who attended. I forget the exact figure, but it was high. It was fitting that he was later elected to the Royal Society. One might have thought that this would give him unalloyed pleasure, but with him it was never safe to take anything for granted. He learned with chagrin that he had been elected under a statute under which Harold Wilson, a politician of whom he did not think highly, had also been elected. I don't know how mollified he was when it was pointed out to him that Winston Churchill was elected under this same statute.

Popper came to be marvelously at home in the English language. He had a happy knack for coining catchy names, or right-to-left definitions, to use one of them, for important ideas. He also had an un-Germanic partiality for low to middlebrow English expressions, such as "I may pop off any time" and "not my cup of tea." At a conference on his philosophy at LSE in 1980, he startled us by saying, "I may have to eat humble pie." And he had a good line in self-deprecating remarks. He wanted to call a collection of essays of his "Remnants and Rejects" but the publisher wouldn't let him. In a reply to Hilary Putnam, he called him "a leader of the younger generation of logicians" whereas he, Popper, was only "a tottering old metaphysician." A radio critic in New Zealand, commenting on the clarity of a talk by Popper on Newton, suggested that the speaker's unfamiliarity with English may have restricted him to simple words. The implied prediction that as his mastery of English improved he would become increasingly obscure was not borne out.

A BBC producer once asked me: "What motivated him?" Well, whatever it was, it drove him with a demonic intensity. The best answer, I think, is: *problems.* Keynes said that for Moore propositions had the same objectivity as the furniture. For Popper, problems had something of the objectivity of an old bureau with inner cabinets and hidden recesses full of rich material. And he had a marvelous ability to draw others into his problems. I often came back from Fallowfield with the problem I had gone out there to discuss supplanted by some new problem—say to do with time's arrow or the distinction between logical and extra-logical constants, of whose existence I had previously been unaware. Some people scoff at Karl Popper's World-3 metaphysics, but it grew out of his own experience of problems that are "out there" and that turn out to be deeper and richer the more one explores them.

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Sources

I intermittently kept a diary between 1946 and 1958. The Popper papers acquired by the Hoover Institution, Stanford, in 1987 recently became available, on microfilm, in the Archive section of the British Library of Political and Economic Science. I have made some use of these, especially correspondence with Braithwaite, Carnap, Eccles, Feigl, Gombrich, Hayek, Lakatos, Medawar, and Russell. The Archive section also has the Lakatos papers. I have benefited from conversation with Popper's long-standing friend Ernst Gombrich. I have tried to minimize overlap with Popper's admirable autobiography *Unended Quest.*

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Outsider

EDGAR KOERNER

"I am fine how are you" reads the earliest
of the hundreds of letters you find
in a drawer as you clear out
your mother's apartment. Each one
is signed with your name, but,
as you read through the clutter,
you only dimly remember
a soldier
from San Antonio, all earnest ambition,
reciting his post-army plans, a camper
from Maine wanting comic books sent,
a sophomore from Harvard who
"may bring home a girl."
What girl?
It's as if, after long absence,
you've stumbled into a family reunion,
selves coming back from all over,
selves you're surprised not to know better,
all milling around, each with something
to say, and now there's just you to listen,
you who have been out of touch.
She
never lost touch. Oh, how she loved
to tell stories, over and over, visiting
with every one of these selves!
She'd be right at home
in this reunion, hugging one,

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kissing another, re-introducing you
right and left. "Oh, but *of course*
you remember. . . ."
She always held taut
the thread that connected, and now,
with her gone, you, the outsider,
sit on the floor with this gathering
of selves and, not knowing just why,
but reading, re-reading, you grope
for the thread she left for you, dangling.

✪ EDGAR KOERNER, a retired investment banker, is the President of the Board of the Children's Aid Society of New York. His poems have appeared in the *Southern Review, Judaism, Poetry East,* and other magazines.

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Everything's Important, Everything's Brief

SAMUEL HAZO

The stroke had killed his English.
All that remained was Swedish
he no longer spoke because
the stroke had stilled his tongue
as well.
Phoning in his stead
was Monica who asked if I
would like to hear "the voice
of Tomas."
A man's voice,
groping for syllables in Swedish
but a man's voice still,
wobbled over the Atlantic
to Pittsburgh from Västerås.
Then,
perfect and lucid as reveille,
he played a prelude by Chopin.
Because the stroke had spared
his limbs, his fingers spoke
to me for three full minutes
in Chopin.
Each note was true
and Baltic as the language in his finest
poems . . .
Afterwards, a pause,
followed by blind laughter
in Swedish, then good-bye.

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I sat there, phone in hand,
re-hearing what I'd hear just once
in all my life.
He
made me feel . . .
How can I
say this?
Imagine something
free and beautiful and captive
all at once—like a finger suddenly
enhanced but still imprisoned by a ring.
Like mercy.
Like a love so unexpected
that it never left its name.

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Duck/Rabbit

(for Jennifer Clarvoe)

BILLY COLLINS

The lamb may lie down with the lion,
But they will never be as close as this pair
Who share the very lines
Of their existence, whose overlapping is
    their raison d'être.
How strange and sympathetic the binds
That make one disappear
Whenever the other is spied.
Throw the duck a stare,
And the rabbit hops into his cage.
Give the rabbit the eye,
And the duck waddles off the page.
O these could be our mascots, you and I—
  I could look at you forever
  And never see the two of us together.

✪ BILLY COLLINS is a Professor of English at Lehman College (CUNY). His most recent collection of poems is *The Art of Drowning.*

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Altar Boy

BRIAN DOYLE

I will go up to the altar of God
The giver of youth and happiness.
—Psalm 43

Introit

I missed one Mass as an altar boy—the Tuesday dawn patrol, 6:00 A.M., Father Dennis Whelan presiding. He was a good-natured fellow, a cigar smoker, although he was a little young for it, that kind of guy, but he was furious when I trudged back to the sacristy after sitting through the second half of Mass in the very last pew.

Where were you?

I was late, Father.

You miss another and you're out of the corps.

I'm very sorry, Father.

It's no joke to be all alone out there.

Yes, Father.

I knew why he was peeved; I was the key to his famous twenty-two-minute Mass. He pulled off this miracle week after week, without ever looking at his watch. His Mass drew the faithful by the dozens, especially businessmen trying to catch the weekday 6:30 train into New York City. One time Whelan had the 6:00 on St. Patrick's Day, and we had nearly fifty people in the church—still a record for our parish, I bet.

Working with Whelan was a pleasure; he was a real artist, someone who would have made his mark in any field. He had all the tools—good hands, nimble feet, a sense of drama, a healthy ego, the unnerving itch to be loved that all great performers have. He did not rush his movements, mumble, or edit his work. He was *efficient*, yes—he'd send his right hand out for the chalice as his left was carving a blessing in the air, that sort of thing—but every motion was cleanly executed and held in the air for the proper instant, and he had astounding footwork

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for such a slab of meat. He was one or two inches over six feet tall, 250 pounds maybe, big belly sliding around in his shirt, but he was deft at the altar and could turn on a dime in the thick red carpet. He cut a memorable double pivot around the corners of the altar table on his way to his spot, and he cut that sucker as cleanly as a professional skater before a Russian judge.

My job was simple: I was the wizard's boy, and the whole essence of being a great altar boy was to be where you needed to be without seeming to get there. Great altar boys flowed to their spots, osmosed from place to place. They just appeared suddenly at the priest's elbow and then vanished like Cheshire cats. There were other arts—quick work with the hands, proper bell ringing, a firm hand with matches and candles, the ability to project a sort of blue-collar holiness on the stage, that sort of thing—but the flowing around like a five-foot-tall column of water was the main thing, and it was damned hard to learn. Rookies spent their whole first year, and often two, lurching around the altar like zombies, a tick behind Father's moves, which led to, horror of horrors, an irritated Father gesturing distractedly for what he needed. Extra gestures from the wizard were the greatest sins, and we recoiled in horror when we saw them when we were at Mass with our families and out of uniform. At such moments, when the clod at the altar forgot to ring the bells, or brought the wrong cruet, or knelt there like a stone when he should have been liquiding around the altar in a flutter of surplice sleeves, I closed my eyes in shame and in memory, for my rookie year was a litany of errors too long to list, and my graduation from rookie to veteran was a source of great pride to me.

Gloria

Whelan was all business out there from the moment he strode purposefully through the little doorway from the sacristy. He had to duck a bit to get under the lintel easily, but even this little dip was done smoothly and powerfully, as if he had trained for it. This quick duck-and-rise move made it appear that he was leaping onto the stage, and he always startled the rail birds getting in a last ask before the lights went up; by the time Whelan was front and center, the old birds were back in their pews doing the rosary ramble.

Whelan ran his Mass like clockwork, and God help the boy who was still sleepy, because the man knew our marks like they were chalked on the floor, and he expected us to be quick with the equipment of the Mass—glassware, towels, smoke. Cruets were to be filled to the neck, incense respectfully removed from the boat and properly lit in the thurible, hand towel clean and folded over the left arm, Mass book open to the right page, bells rung sharply at exactly the instant he

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paused for the sharp ringing of the bells. He also liked his wine cut with water in advance, half and half. Most priests liked to mix it themselves during Mass. Some drank mostly water with only a touch of wine for color and legitimacy; some drank the wine straight, with barely a drop of water. Few priests drank a full load of wine; even the heavy hitters found cheap burgundy distasteful at dawn. We did, too, although there were more than a few boys who drank wine in the musty stockroom, and every altar boy at some point gobbled a handful of Communion wafers to see how they tasted fresh from the box. They tasted like typing paper. After I discovered that the hosts came wholesale from a convent in New Jersey, the consecrated Host never tasted quite as savory again.

Oremus

I joined the altar boys because my older brother was in the corps and because my parents expected it. Also you could get out of class for funerals. Funerals and weddings paid, usually a buck, although there were rumors of five-dollar weddings, and it was said of one boy that he had once received a twenty-dollar bill from a bride's father who was drunk. Baptisms didn't pay—a quarter, maybe, if you were doing twins. The way to make money was to do funerals and to work the banks of candles on either side of the altar. The big ones were on the left and the little ones were on the right—"big ones for the horses and little ones for the dogs," as Mr. Collins, the altar master, said with an enigmatic smile. He was a horseplayer, I think.

People would come up to the candles before and after Mass, and if you were there in uniform, they'd hand you the money, even though the steel box was right in front of them. Large candles were a dollar, and small ones were a quarter.

Light a big one for my grandmother, they'd say, crumpling a bill into your hand.

Here's a quarter for my boy at sea.

Here's a quarter for a marriage.

A quarter for the Pope's health.

Two smalls, for my intentions.

A dollar for the dead.

The code among us was that coins placed in your hand were yours; bills went into the box. The theory was that we were just standing there and the women (they were mostly women) were handing us money out of the goodness of their hearts. This was the first tickle of sin for some of us, and while the practice enriched some boys, it was by no means universal, partly because our cassocks had no pockets and partly because Mr. Collins learned about it from a first-year boy

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and after that kept a sharp eye on us from the sacristy door. A boy named Frank Cuozzo was asked to leave the corps because of this, and it caused great embarrassment to his family. He became a bully in adolescence and probably still is.

The Poem of the Twenty-Two Rites and Thirteen Masses

When I was an altar boy, there were twenty-two rites for the Mass, and we were expected to know them even though we were to be witnesses and assistants at only one, the Roman rite, by far the world and Olympic champion in Western civilization. There were actually two other Western rites and a startling total of nineteen Eastern Catholic rites. All twenty-two rites remain in my mind not unlike a poem, and so I chant the Poem of the Twenty-Two Rites, which I dedicate to Father Dennis Whelan, wherever he may be: Abyssinian, Albanian, Ambrosian, Armenian, Bulgarian, Chaldean, Coptic, Georgian, Greek, Hungarian, Italo-Albanian, Malabar, Malankar, Maronite, Melkite, Mozarabic, Roman, Rumanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Serbian, and Syrian. I even remember that the Ambrosian rite was used only in Milan, and the Mozarabic rite only in Toledo and Salamanca in Spain. And then there are the thirteen Masses within the Roman rite: the Missa Cantata, or sung Mass (or "High Mass") sung by a priest and a choir, the Gregorian Masses (a series celebrated for thirty consecutive days for the release of a soul in purgatory), the Low (the "usual Mass," like the ones I assisted Father Whelan with), the Pontifical (said by a bishop), the Solemn (sung by a priest with acolytes, choir, deacon, and sub-deacon), the Votive (priest's choice of intentions), Missa Pro Populo (said by pastors by Church law eighty-eight times a year), Mass of a Saint, Mass of Exposition, Mass of Reposition, Mass of the Catechumens (the first half of Mass, before the big moment), Mass of the Faithful (second half), and Mass of the Presanctified (part of the Good Friday Mass during the Passion of Christ).

To remember all this, is that prayer or foolishness?

Mass of the Faithful

After Father Whelan was on his mark, facing the congregation from behind the altar, Mass was under way. The pieces of it snicked into place like oiled parts of an engine. Opening prayers, prayer for the intention of the day, Gospel, Eucharist, serving of Eucharist along the rail, left to right and back again, cleanup and closing prayers, back to the front of the altar for the brisk procession back into the sacristy. Or, in the order of the Latin prayers we learned and then unlearned, aufer a nobis, oramus te, Kyrie (Greek, left over from the first and second centuries A.D. before the Mass went Latin), *Gloria, Alleluia,*

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Credo, Dominus Vobiscum, Oremus, Sanctus, Te igitur, Communicantes, Hanc igitur, Quam oblationem, unde et memores, Supra quae, Supplices, per quem, per ipsum, Pater Noster, Libera nos, Agnus Dei, Domine, Ite missa es, placeat, and then a rush for the door, or, in the case of the priest and the altar boy, a dignified retreat to the sacristy.

As Whelan ducked back under the sacristy lintel, he was a different man, and even before he was across the room you could see the steel go out of his body. At the counter, he took off his alb and hung up his rope belt on the inside of his closet door. Then he peeled his surplice off over his head like a boy yanking off a sweater, and then he sat down on his stool and lit a cigar. By then my amice and cassock were hanging in my locker and I was sitting in one of the two chairs by the door. It was considered bad form to leave the sacristy before Father left. Some boys waited impatiently by the door, but I rather liked Whelan and enjoyed the postmortem:

Good job out there, son.

Thank you, Father.

Could do the bells a little sharper.

Yes, Father.

Then still them with your off hand.

Yes, Father.

Are we on next week?

Monday for me, Father.

Ah, that'll be Father Driscoll.

Driscoll was another brisk guy, although not quite so smooth as Whelan. He was a good deal younger, and he lingered over the prayers a little. It was said that he had a hair shirt and the stigmata, and we watched his hands closely when he carved the prayers during Mass. You couldn't really tell about the stigmata; there were marks there, but he could have cut himself working in the priests' garden, which was the domain of a little Italian fellow who made pickles and such. Driscoll's small hands were always moist, and he had the unusual habit of shaking hands with his altar boys after a Mass; he did this as part of his disrobing ritual, and he would actually come into our little locker room to shake hands if we'd forgotten about it. He always seemed out of place there, and he didn't stay any longer than the handshake.

Once a visiting Franciscan who didn't know the custom wandered into our locker room after a Sunday Mass and sat down companionably. There were four of us boys there at the time, two just finished and two suiting up, and I remember the uncomfortable silences after the priest's friendly questions; we weren't used to a priest in our room, and he was an oddity anyway, with his hooded brown robe and bare

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feet in enormous sandals. He had gnarled feet like the roots of oak trees. The veins on his feet looked like cables and his toenails were as big as quarters. He finally realized the score and left, after shaking our hands. His hands were a lot bigger and dryer than Father Driscoll's. He didn't have the stigmata.

Years later I realized with a start that Christ probably looked a good deal like the Franciscan, with his dusty feet and pocked face, and I had ignored the guy, wished him gone no less than shaky Peter had wished Jesus gone from his past before the cock crew; Peter standing there in the icy darkness, the fire at his feet sparking up into the dangerous night, sharp voices coming at him like needles, he shifts uneasily from foot to foot and damns his friend as easily, as thoughtlessly, as you might crush a beetle; then a shooting pain of light in the sky, dawn crawls over the hills, and right in his ear, as loud and shrill as a scream, comes the shriek of a rooster and the horrible knowledge that he has betrayed the man he loves . . .

Consecration

Actual belief in the miracle was mixed among us boys, although all of us watched the priests' hands with awe at the instant the Host was changed into the living, breathing Body of Christ. We did not expect actually to see change steal over the Host itself, as we had been told ad infinitum by the nuns that the miracle was beyond human ken, but we did half expect to see a priest's hands burst spontaneously into flame as he handled the distilled essence of the Mind that invented the universe. There was some discussion about what we should do if a hand fire broke out. There were two general camps: the first insisted that the water cruet should be flung at the fire, and the second advised a sprint away from the awful miracle and toward the janitor, who spoke only shards of English but who knew how to deal with shards of glass, fire, locked doors, broken bicycle chains, vomit, heart attacks, dog bites, broken teeth, broken noses, blood, and sobbing first graders who wet their pants because they were too shy to raise their hands and ask Sister if they could go to the bathroom.

I could never turn my eyes away from that key moment, though. It was and is the single most mysterious and bizarre belief of my faith, and it was in many ways the thing that set us apart from all other Christian denominations. In later years I would sit in Congregationalist and Episcopalian and Lutheran services and observe the Communions of those faiths, the passing of torn bread among the faithful and the circulating cups of wine, and while these acts seemed friendlier to me, more communal than the shivering magic of the Transubstantiation, they seemed insubstantial, too, muted, more like a casual brunch

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than a heartbreaking Last Supper. I always wanted to like the communions of other faiths, but they seemed pale to me. I suppose being dipped in miracles every day inoculates you against the mundane; or at least it shoots your sense of perspective all to hell. I still expect miracles, and I have seen some: my wife, my daughter coming out of my wife, my twin sons coming out of my wife one after another like a circus act, the bolt of light that shot around the room when my uncle died.

Requiem

Recently I went to Mass in the Cathedral of the Madeleine in Salt Lake City. This edifice, a monument to the staying power of Catholicism in the heart of Mormon country, is the church where my late father-in-law was an altar boy in the 1920s. He was also a student there, as the cathedral once housed a grade school in its nether regions (four Congregation of Holy Cross nuns taught eight grades). But it was the altar itself that I was interested in. During Mass I deliberately detoured past the immense stone altar and proscenium, thinking of the man who once knelt there, garbed in acolyte's robes, draped in youth, not yet the affable patriarch who would sire six children and build a business and hammer a home out of the Oregon woods and die there suddenly among his pastures and gardens, his breath sliding to a halt as his lungs filled with fluid, his wife holding him in her arms as he slumped helplessly to one side of the bed, the look on his face more confusion than pain, his death a great surprise to him on a lovely April morning, the scents of horses and blackberry trickling in the window.

I don't know what I expected to see there, amid the pomp and circumstance of Mass in this garish old castle. I suppose I was looking for the marks of his knees, or the hovering nugget of his soul. He died before I met him, before I could thank him for his daughter and show him my daughter and sons. I have looked for him in the woods and in the wood of the house he made. I have been closest to him near a small pond that he labored to clear from the woods, but the forest in Oregon is a tenacious thing, and it took the pond back after the man died.

Adolesensuous

Certainly being an altar boy was training for the priesthood, in the way that baseball's little leagues are training grounds for the big leagues. We were encouraged to go on outings with the younger priests, who took us to carnivals and baseball games (always the Mets, never the Yankees) and bowling alleys. The eighth graders made a pilgrimage to the seminary at Garrison, New York, every year; the year I went,

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the school had just opened a vast and gleaming sports center, and a quiver of athletic lust went through me like winter wind when the doors to this Xanadu swung open and revealed an oceanic swimming pool and glittering gymnasium with polished hardwood floors and *glass backboards.* We nearly fainted with desire. The young priest showing off this gem had the wit to remain silent as we gaped at Neverland, and my friends and I spent the rest of the day envisioning ourselves sprinting and spinning and scoring thousands of points on that perfect floor, the stands throbbing with local girls tantalized not only by our patent skill but by the thought that we were tadpole priests—how much more enticing to lure a prospective saint down into the willow trees by the river, and there slip a tongue in his mouth and get his hand on your breast and see if the Catholic Church in the vaguely sanctified person of this gangly zit of a boy was indeed convinced that asceticism was a road to holiness.

Combine this athletic Xanadu with the sweeping view of the Hudson Valley below, and the lush playing fields terracing off into the distance, and the sense that a boy living at a high school fully two hours from home was an independent and mature creature, and you had a potent draw for boys on the lip of puberty; but then we were served mystery meat for lunch, in a dank military-style cafeteria, and shown through the cold moist barracks, where narrow metal cots stretched away for miles, where a thousand boys had pulled the pud in a thousand slate-gray stalls, and they lost us. All the way home Father Driscoll chirped the virtues of the seminary, but we were silent, each boy afraid to be the first to burst the poor man's bubble. He might, after all, bear the stigmata; plus we felt sorry for him. He had once been sentenced to a narrow cot and horse burgers and dismal mornings in a dank gray stall where cockroaches did the fandango through scummy puddles.

We went home to our bright houses with joy.

Catechumens

On mornings when I had the 6:00 Mass, I would awake in the woolly dark and leave my brothers snoring like bears and pedal through the empty streets with my fists clenched in my jacket pockets and my collar turned up against the whip of dawn. The church was silent and dark. The only light in it was the tabernacle lamp, and the only sign of human life the stray styrofoam coffee cups filled with cigarette butts in the back of the church, the spoor of the Nocturnal Adoration Society, which met once a month to conduct a vigil with the Blessed Sacrament, which reposed inside a monstrance on the altar; teams of men would arrive every hour and replace the team in the church, each

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team yawning as it passed the other, each exchanging muted greetings, a handshake here and there in the dark air, the men checking their watches and settling down on their knees like old horses waiting for dawn.

There were seven lay societies: the Altar Society (for women), the Blessed Virgin Sodality (for young women), the Holy Name Society (for men), the Legion of Mary, the Mother's Club, the Nocturnal Adoration Society, and the Rosary Society (for women). While my ambition was someday to join my father in the Nocturnal Adoration Society, my admiration was highest for the Altar Society, whose members worked liked bees to keep the church and its accoutrements sparkling. "It was they who undertook the laundering of altar linens, communion cloths and surplices, the polishing of the brass candelabra and altar vases, as well as the disposal of withered flowers, ferns, and pot plants," the Irish writer Mary Lavin recounts in her story "A Voice from the Dead." They were an efficient lot, friendly but brisk, and the Good Lord Himself could not help a boy who got in their way when they were stripping the altar linens; more than once I was shouldered against the cold wall of the sacristy by a brisk Altar Society Woman with an armful of God's laundry, on her way purposefully, moving through the waters of the day like a battleship, toward her dank basement laundry room and the magic Maytag thundering away down there like the monstrous engine in a tramp steamer.

Incense

Almost always I was at the church before Father Whelan. I would hear his steps in the courtyard and smell his cigar. He smoked villainous cigars, execrable things that smelled like peat moss and burned fitfully if at all. He was always at them, lighting, re-lighting, puffing determinedly, moaning with despair at the shoddy plug that hung like a zeppelin between his lips. He got them from the tobacconist in the village, a seedy man with a harelip who gave the priests a break, twenty percent off, probably in exchange for future considerations. I knew the price because I once bought a box for Whelan after Mass; he'd been caught short, and after thrashing his pockets like a man with bees in his pants, he sat me down in the sacristy.

I need a favor, son.

Yes, Father.

It's unorthodox.

Yes, Father.

I need cigars.

Cigars?

Cigars. A box of them.

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Yes, Father.
You'll have to go up to the village. You have a bike.
Yes, Father.
Get a box of panatelas. Here's a fiver.
Yes, Father.
Don't smoke any.
No, Father.
Keep the change.
Yes, Father.
None of these coronas, now.
Yes, Father.
What?
I mean No, Father.

Memento

I remember the dark scent of the church at dawn, the dense purple light, the smells of incense and cigars and dust. I remember the dry shuffling of shoes as communicants shambled toward the Host. I remember the twisted faces of saints in the windows, Veronica's pale hand outstretched with a cloth for the face of Christ, the bulging Popeye forearm of Simon as he supported the collapsing Savior. I remember the groaning organ and the reverberating yowl of an infant being baptized in the nave. I remember the stiff black cloth under which you hid all desire and personality as you prepared to assist at a miracle that you did not and could never understand but which you watched for ravenously, like a hawk after meat. For a time we were expected to wear ties under our cassocks, but eventually this stricture was lifted and we were allowed to go tieless. No jeans, no sneakers, no sandals—this last despite the gnarled tree-like feet of the Franciscans at the altar once a month. You buttoned your cassock from the bottom up, to be sure of symmetry, and then you slipped on the starched white surplice. A simple uniform, black and white, unornamented, memorable.

Credo

I have come, in my middle years, to a passionate belief in a Coherence—a pervasive divineness that I only dimly comprehend and cannot at all articulate. It is a feeling, a sense. I feel it most near my elfin daughter, my newborn sons. Last night I stood over the huddled body of my daughter, asleep in her bed, her hair flowing around her like dark water. She had fallen asleep only minutes before, sobbing herself to sleep after soiling herself and her bedding and her bear. She is very sick and cannot control her bowels, and she is humiliated and fright-

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ened by this; she fell asleep in my wife's arms, her sobs muffled in the folds of my wife's deep soft flannel shirt. I stand above her now in the dark. She is curled like a question in the corner of her bed. My body curls itself into an ancient gesture of prayer and humility, and I place my hands together and begin to weep—for love of this child, in fear of illness, in despair at my helplessness. I make a prayer in the dark. I believe so strongly, so viscerally, in a wisdom and vast joy under the tangled weave of the world, under the tattered blanket of our evil and tragedy and illness and brokenness and sadness and loss, that I cannot speak it, cannot articulate it, but can only hold on to ritual and religion like a drowning man to a sturdy ship.

Benedicamus Domino

"And so the Mass comes to an end, in a whirl of purifications and postscripts that do not seek to impress themselves deeply on the mind; one has not enough capacity left for receiving impressions," wrote Ronald Knox. "'And every man went to his own house,' as it says frequently in the Old Testament and once in the New, and that is what we do; we must be alone."

Many a time I was alone, when it was all over, when the rail birds had gone from the rail, when the businessmen were walking briskly to their trains. When the audience was gone, the janitor would whip through the church slamming the kneelers back up and slipping missals and songbooks back into their racks behind each pew. Then he would bow before the altar and slip out a side door toward the school. I would wait for the click of the side door closing and then wander out of the sacristy and sit down in a pew and think and listen and wait for something to happen. The building groaned and creaked, the candles fluttered and sizzled, bees and flies bounced off the windows. In the windows were the saints, red and blue and green and pink, their faces and bodies and fluttering hands outlined in lead. After a few minutes I would walk down the aisle, past the empty pews and kneelers and missals and Stations of the Cross, and push through the massive oak door and into the broad fat light of the new day, dazzled.

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The Basket Maker

SHULAMITH WECHTER CAINE

He meditates on musky grasses
osiers and bamboo.

Over cupped palms his laced-together
fingers weave a flower basket.

It is February, cold
as last night's tea, but in his workroom

it is like September, sweet-smelling
as a barn of new-mown hay.

Even on special days he does not
toss a coin and pray at the shrine.

Polio-withered legs, pliant
as willow wands, dangle in his rough work pants.

Once I heard him sing as he worked.
"Make it good, do it well,"

he repeated like an incantation.
"Make it good, do it well."

Weaving a basket, even the humblest
tea strainer, is a form of prayer.

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Bogie in Africa

JEFFREY MEYERS

I

By 1951 HUMPHREY BOGART had made sixty-three films, mostly under contract with Warner Brothers, and had recently done two movies that showed Bogart predictably being Bogart. Neither *The Enforcer*, a well-constructed gangster thriller, nor *Sirocco*, a poor man's *Casablanca*, offered him much of a challenge. He was terribly bored with conventional roles, despite the high salary and share of the profits. *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), an ambitious project, co-written and directed by his close friend John Huston, shot on location in acute discomfort, would extend Bogart's range. *The African Queen* gave him a chance to display his wit and humanity, his fine grasp of character and comic timing.

Columbia and Warners had previously planned to make C. S. Forester's *The African Queen*—first with Charles Laughton and Elsa Lanchester, then with David Niven and Bette Davis, and finally with Paul Henreid and Ida Lupino. But none of these projects worked out. Warners would have shot the movie in a tank on the back lot in Burbank, with no real Africans—or Africa—in sight. But the flamboyant, luxury-loving Austrian-born producer Sam Spiegel, who always operated on the verge of bankruptcy, bought the rights from Warners. The director Joseph Losey described him as "a highly educated man and a very bright and not insensitive man. He is a megalomaniac and I think impossible for most directors to work with because he wants his films to be 'Spiegel' pictures."

Although he seemed like a caricature of a movie entrepreneur, Spiegel was adventurous and ambitious, able to tolerate extreme financial pressure and willing to give in to Huston's quixotic and very expensive decision to make the film in a remote and dangerous place. Spiegel arranged the precarious financing with the Woolf brothers'

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Romulus Films in England. The original budget was about £400,000. Bogart got $160,000 in deferred payments and 30 percent of the film's profits. The co-star Katharine Hepburn got $65,000 in cash, the same amount in deferred payments and 10 percent of the profits. The director Huston got $87,000 and half the profits. Spiegel and the Woolfs took financial risks and, using fine actors and a superior director as their insurance, produced a masterpiece.

Though Bogart's mother had sparked his interest with tales about her art studies in Paris, a city he had hoped to see during his naval service in World War I, he was not very interested in foreign travel. Before he met Huston, he rarely went beyond the 120 miles between Beverly Hills and Palm Springs. But once under Huston's spell, he agreed to fly 12,000 miles into the Belgian Congo in central Africa. Bogart believed that his first two marriages had broken up because of separations from wives who pursued their own careers. He therefore insisted that Lauren Bacall travel with him to Africa, and they remained abroad for four and a half months.

When the couple left Los Angeles for New York and Europe in March 1951, their nursemaid Alyce Hartley brought the two-year-old Steve Bogart to the airport to see his parents depart. As soon as their plane took off, she had a cerebral hemorrhage and died instantly, still holding the child in her arms. Bacall's mother rescued Steve and took care of him. The Bogarts maintained their schedule, continued their journey, and sailed to France on the *Liberté* on March 12. Bogart had lived for many years in the rather circumscribed world of the studio and Hollywood, where ordinary people allowed the stars to maintain their privacy. On the streets of Paris he was pleased to discover he was famous. Strangers would enthusiastically call out "Umfree Beaugare" and, making machine gun noises, pretend to shoot him down. Bogart and Bacall, like other wealthy American tourists, enjoyed the night life in Paris, London, Venice, and Rome in that joyous time when Europe was recovering from the war and beginning to live again.

In early April 1951, just before leaving for Léopoldville, the Bogarts, with the aid of an American monsignor, had an audience with an even greater celebrity—the seventy-five-year-old Pope Pius XII. They were led through the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel and into the gold-ceilinged throne room. Then, with ten others, they passed through five increasingly smaller rooms and formed a semicircle. The Pope entered silently, dressed in white and wearing red velvet slippers. They knelt to kiss his ring; he blessed them and gave them a medal.

For once, Bogart seemed intimidated and made no sarcastic remarks. Assuming an uncharacteristically reverential tone, he told

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Louella Parsons: "I stood there deeply impressed, not only with his genuine spiritual radiance, but with everything about him—his appearance, his voice, his ability with languages." When the Pope asked where he came from, Bogart, thinking Hollywood would sound rather tawdry, chose a more reputable residence and said: "San Francisco." Bogart professed the proper attitude in public, but in private his humble piety soon wore off. He later joked that the Pope, who had stared intently at Bacall and held her hand for a long time, might request an even more intimate audience with her.

Bogart had met Katharine Hepburn in London. Their relationship, so central to the film, developed into a close friendship during the difficult months in Africa and endured until his death. Brilliantly cast as the plain and pious Rose Sayer, she was (like Bogart) the child of a surgeon and a suffragette. As a girl she had visited her aunt at Lake Canandaigua in upstate New York, where the Bogarts had a summer home, but had never met little Humphrey. She came from a family with a high number of suicides and had herself suffered a nervous breakdown. Married for a time, she had had affairs with the poet Phelps Putnam, the director John Ford, the producer Leland Hayward, and the tycoon Howard Hughes as well as a long-term relationship with the married Spencer Tracy. Her mother had died just before she left for Africa, and she was unusually prickly and irritable when she reached Europe. Hepburn lived intimately with Bogart and Bacall for two months and observed them closely. She recalled their powerful physical bond and their enjoyment of quarrels that were followed by a delightful reconciliation: "She and Bogie seemed to have the most enormous opinion of each other's charms, and when they fought it was with the utter confidence of two cats locked deliciously in the same cage."

There were many African servants, but Bacall made herself useful as laundress, chef, and nurse. Bogart liked to see her play a domestic role, and would have been quite content if she had given up her career and stayed at home. She, ironically, said that when she "traipsed along to Africa . . . washed his clothes, cooked for the cast and crew, this suited Bogey down to the last tsetse fly. He was prouder of me then, this I know, than he ever is when he sees me on the screen. I was in a woman's place, wasn't I?" Bogart—recalling his third wife's jealous, angry query: "Who's going to wash his socks?"—remarked of Bacall: "I didn't know what we'd have done without her. She Luxed my undies in darkest Africa." In the *Sunday News* of December 2, 1951, next to a photo of him sleeping in a hammock while Bacall hangs out the wash, Bogart wrote: "You think Baby would do this for me at home? Not on your life. I take her half way round the

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world, and suddenly she becomes the perfect housewife. In Hollywood she once washed a handkerchief—no kiddin'."

Huston, the co-author as well as director, believed (as he had in Mexico) that the film would have more character and the actors would give better performances if they actually suffered hardships on location. He had scouted sites by plane in Kenya, Tanganyika, and Northern Rhodesia and rejected Lake Victoria, which "looked like suburban Maidenhead" and was too pretty for a jungle setting. He finally chose Uganda and the Belgian Congo, where banking, communications, and logistics were much more difficult to arrange than in British territory. But he liked the challenge of a primitive setting and wanted to be as far as possible from Spiegel's control. Huston, Hepburn, Bogart, and Bacall, with a production staff of thirty-four British technicians, spent ten weeks (early April to mid-June) in Biondo, on the Ruiki tributary of the Congo, as well as in Butiaba on Lake Albert and in Murchison Falls, both in western Uganda. *The African Queen* was mainly shot just beyond Stanley Falls, where Conrad had entered the heart of darkness in 1890, and Bogart's broken-down boat in the film looks rather like Conrad's "battered, twisted, ruined, tin-pot steamboat," the *Roi des Belges.*

Peter Viertel, who helped Huston write the final scenes, met the actors at Stanleyville airport. He broke the news that Huston, instead of politely waiting to welcome them, had left only an hour before to hunt elephant near the makeshift village that had been constructed for the cast and crew. Hepburn—extremely anxious about the unfinished script, the lack of funds, and the slapdash preparations—thought "it was an utterly piggish thing to do and it makes me mad to think of it even now—goddamn—goddamn." While they were hanging around Stanleyville, a fire broke out on the motorboat they had hired to cross the river and the captain was seriously burned. Bogart, as cool and courageous as in his movies, promptly put out the fire with blanket and sand. A few days later, they crossed the Congo, took an eight-hour ride on a wood-burning train to the nearest town and traveled the final forty miles by car to Biondo.

Huston wanted a close jungle and narrow river for filming. The Ruiki, a thin winding waterway with trees and thick vines forming a canopy between stream and sky, was perfect. This was Bogart's first color film, and the exotic scenery looked spectacular. Biondo "was a romantic-looking place," Huston wrote, "huts all thatched with palms, little paths lined with bamboo and a dining room big enough to hold seventy-five people. We even had shower baths. . . . Most of the shooting was done on a raft made of planks laid across pirogues. . . . All in all, for a film where everything we needed had to be flown in or

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shipped in laboriously overland, things went quite smoothly. We lacked luxuries, but we had basic comforts." Huston could not see the rushes in Africa. He sent the film to Nairobi and had it flown to London, and the Woolfs cabled back their favorable reaction.

Bogart, older and less adventurous than the others, was not enthusiastic about Africa. He would just as soon have stayed home and made the picture in the comfort of the studio. Unlike Hepburn, he never went hunting with Huston and preferred to remain in the isolated camp—reading, talking, and drinking. "Bogey the Beefer," who called himself "a natural-born griper," disliked the unpleasant and sometimes dangerous conditions: the bad roads, intense heat, withering humidity, green mildew, foul water, malaria and dysentery, tsetse flies, stubborn mosquitoes and voracious red ants, poisonous snakes and wild boar, crocodiles and hippos swarming next to the boat. Huston tried to exaggerate the horrors, claiming that when game got scarce the hunters had secretly turned them into cannibals by supplementing their diet with human flesh.

Bogart stuck to canned pork and beans and asparagus during this time of "semi-starvation," which he found "rougher than a stucco bathtub." They played darts in the evening, went to sleep by ten and got up at five. Bacall made sure that everyone took anti-malaria pills. When they moved to a houseboat on the Nile in Uganda, the water filters didn't work. Hepburn had a severe bout of dysentery and often vomited between takes, the cameraman Jack Cardiff and many others succumbed to malaria, and nine crew members were sent back sick to England. Neither Bogart nor Huston got sick. Hepburn's theory was that they "had so lined their insides with alcohol that no bug could live in the atmosphere." Bogart's final judgment of the African journey was: "pretty awful, but I wouldn't have missed it."

While Bogart was complaining about the food, the heat, and the bugs, Hepburn got on his nerves by finding the whole experience quite glorious. He teased her mercilessly and once, while she was sleeping, placed a freshly caught fish on her back. With characteristic frankness, he mocked her affectation, quirkiness, vanity, egoism, and didactic monologues and compared her to the lady politician she had played in a 1942 movie:

> She used to say that everything was "divine." The goddam stinking natives were divine. "Oh, what a *divine* native," she'd say. "Oh, what a *divine* pile of manure!" You had to ask yourself, "Is this really the dame or is this something left over from *Woman of the Year?*"
>
> She does pretty much as she goddam pleases. . . . She came in lugging a full-length mirror and a flock of toothbrushes. She brushed her teeth all the time and she habitually takes about four or five baths a day. She talks at you

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as though you were a microphone. I guess she was nervous, though, and scared of John and me. . . .

To keep her happy, we rigged up a sort of Chic Sale dressing shack, floated it on oil drums, and towed it upstream to location every morning and back again every night. It was a clumsy, yawing barge which took a good two hours to drag each way. But Katie waited on the bank for her dressing room before she'd start work.

He also told the *Hollywood Reporter* that the Bryn Mawr graduate talked a blue streak and was terribly pleased with herself, but could also be sympathetic and kindhearted: "She won't let anybody get a word in sideways. She keeps emphasizing what a superior person she is. At first, I felt as though I was expected to kiss the hem of her skirt, or to lie down on my face in the dirt before her. One day, early in the morning, Huston and I were a little red-eyed from a hard night over a huge bottle. We asked Kate if she had anything that would open our eyes. She was marvelously sweet and naive. She fixed us coffee." Bogart was annoyed when Hepburn, a teetotaler who had struggled for years with Spencer Tracy's heavy drinking, ranted for hours about temperance and the evils of alcohol. He told her off for "always trying to cure the world's ills." He also was puzzled by her sharp, ambiguous retorts—to which Huston responded with a comradely phrase from Conrad's *Lord Jim*: "'You boys believe you're being awfully wicked, don't you?' she snorted. 'Well—you don't know what the word "wicked" means!' The two men looked confused. 'Now, what the hell is she driving at with *that* crack?' Bogie asked. Huston shrugged. 'I dunno—but I *think* she's one of us!'"

Peter Viertel's fine Hemingwayesque novel *White Hunter, Black Heart* (made into a film with Clint Eastwood) describes the making of *The African Queen* and portrays the main characters in the Africa expedition. It concentrates on John Wilson (Huston), famous for his skill at directing but notorious for his renegade overspending. More interested in hunting elephants than in finishing the picture, he is willing to stay in Africa indefinitely. Bogart's desire to finish in time for a boat race wasn't important to Huston during the filming of *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, but his own obsession with elephant hunting had top priority during the making of *The African Queen*.

Bogart, who had gone hunting with his father as a child, disliked the idea of killing animals and would not allow Bacall to accompany Huston. In Viertel's novel, Bogart appears as Philip Duncan, an insecure man with a rasping voice, "given to aggressiveness when not entirely sober, a not uncommon Hollywood trait." In Stanleyville everyone buys huge supplies of canned goods to be ready for any catastrophe. When Wilson, a great womanizer, fails to show up, Duncan

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tries to explain his absence: "Where's the ogre? Why wasn't he there to meet us? I bet he's shacked up with one of these black ladies and has forgotten all about us." Mrs. Duncan, who'd come to Paris with a mountain of luggage, is also sceptical about his motives and worried about his fondness for practical jokes. "I'm sure that bastard John is thinking up some horrible gag for us. He wants to get us off in some horrible hole, and then just stay and stay and watch us all suffer," she says. Hepburn in the novel is the domineering Kay Gibson, who is first dubious about the African location and then says: "I'd like to stay here for years and see it all." But, Philip Duncan notes, she is also concerned about the size of her part and his domination of the film: "She feels she's just a foil for me the way it is now. She just listens and I do all the talking."

The company soon discovered that it was as difficult to film in Africa as to live there. Every morning five cars and trucks drove the actors three miles from Biondo to the banks of the river. Then the thirty-foot *African Queen*—which they had found in derelict condition on Lake Albert, repaired and transported six hundred miles from Uganda to the Congo—pulled four rafts up the river. The first, Huston wrote, was "a replica of the *Queen.* That raft itself became our stage. We could put cameras and equipment on it and move around, photographing Katie and Bogie in the mock-up with as much facility as we'd have had on a studio floor. The second raft carried all of the equipment, lights and props. The third was for the generator. The fourth was Katie's, equipped with a privy, a full-length mirror and a private dressing room."

They would steam a fair distance up the Ruiki, turn the whole elaborate procession around, and do most of the shooting while drifting downstream. But the technical difficulties, even when the crew was healthy, were enormous. Hepburn described how "the camera or lamps or whatever [were] caught by the overhanging shrubbery on the banks. Or we would . . . hit a submerged log and catch on it. Or the sun would go in. Or it would rain. The hysteria of each shot was a nightmare. And there was always the uncertain factor of Bogie and me and whether John thought we'd done a scene well. Or the engine on the *Queen* would stop. Or one of the propellers would be fouled by the dragging rope. Or we would be attacked by hornets. Or a stray pirogue would suddenly appear in the shot." When the rafts hit the river banks during sharp turns, Bogart the yachtsman barked out commands to the crew.

They also had difficulty with the leeches, needed for the now-famous scene in which the hero has to get out and pull the grounded boat through the murky water. Huston naturally wanted to use real

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six-inch bloodsuckers, acquired from a scarred leech-breeder, on Bogart's skinny frame; the terrified actor adamantly refused. The special-effects man, Cliff Richardson, described how he solved the problem by pasting realistic-looking rubber ones onto Bogart: "At first they had real leeches which were supposed to be stuck on the back of a stunt man, but they wouldn't stick. They even arranged for a nurse to puncture his back in the hope that the blood would interest the leeches but that failed too. So I made a plasticine model of one of the leeches and from that a plaster mould was made. We cast the 'leeches' in rubber and inserted a small blood sac into each one. To stick them onto Bogart I used a waterproof adhesive. They had a hell of a job pulling them off but they worked like a charm."

Richardson had more trouble arranging the scene in which Bogart and Hepburn are attacked by swarms of mosquitoes. He had two thousand real insects specially bred by the Institute of Tropical Diseases, and planned to photograph them flying about in a glass-sided box. He would then superimpose these shots over the actual scene in the film. But the little beasties refused to cooperate and settled listlessly on the bottom of the box. Richardson said that they "eventually solved this problem by shooting through an aquarium filled with clear water which was vigorously stirred after throwing in a handful of tea leaves. The gyrating leaves together with the high-pitched buzz of mosquitoes on the sound-track proved quite successful"—though the thick tea leaves look more like swirling butterflies than mosquitoes.

Huston posted an African night watchman next to the boat, telling him to observe it closely and make sure nothing was stolen. One night, as he looked at it very carefully, it slowly sank to the bottom of the river. It took two hundred Congolese workers three days to haul it to the surface. In the midst of these disasters, Sam Spiegel turned up, looking ludicrously out of place with his white shorts, knee socks, pot belly, and huge cigar. Desperately worried, he nevertheless managed to survive all the chaos and hold the project together by wheedling more and more cash out of the backers.

II

The screenplay for *The African Queen* had been written in New York in the fall of 1950 by Huston and James Agee, who as a critic had been very keen about *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre.* Agee found it fascinating and exciting to write with Huston while watching that "particular intelligence and instinct at work. And so is learning from him . . . about good craftsmanship and taste and imagination." The story is simple but extremely effective. According to the *Daily Telegraph,*

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Forester's novel "was inspired by a little-known chapter in the East African campaign of 1915. In that year two armed motor-launches were shipped from London to Cape Town and carried 2,500 miles north by rail, thence 500 miles by jungle track and river and rail again, to the shore of Tanganyika. There they made short work of the German vessels that had been impeding operations."

Though the unusual color photography of scenery and animals must have seemed spectacular, the film is not about Africa but about two people in Africa. Charlie Allnutt, the dissolute skipper of a decrepit riverboat, and Rose Sayer, the strait-laced sister of an English missionary, are thrown together at the outbreak of World War I after her brother dies of a heart attack following the German raids on his compound. Allnutt, concerned about her welfare, stops by and rescues her from the now-deserted mission house. Rose knows nothing about handling boats or navigating the river, but she takes the upper hand. To avenge her brother's death, she persuades Allnutt to run a series of dangerous rapids. She intends to blow up the German gunboat that dominates the lake and blocks the invasion route of the British forces.

Bogart's personal relations with Hepburn in real life were strikingly similar to the relations of the characters in the movie. He was the hard-drinking cynic, she the preachy spinster. They suffered the same illnesses and dangers in the compound as in the film. They began with prejudice and suspicion toward each other, and endured many hardships together. Confined in a narrow space and an isolated setting, they overcame mutual hostility and eventually became very fond of each other. Hepburn was—with Mary Astor, Ingrid Bergman, and the early Bacall—one of Bogart's great co-stars. She felt he was well trained on the stage and (in her telegraphic style) called him "a generous actor. And a no-bunk person. He just did it. He was an actor who enjoyed acting. Knew he was good. Always knew his lines. Always was on time. Hated anything false."

Theodore Bikel, the Austrian-born actor and singer who played an officer on the German gunboat, described the unusual way that Bogart prepared to shoot the last scenes in England: "Rather than learning his lines the night before, he looked at the script in the early morning hours as we sat in the make-up trailer. Then, while the hair people put a small hairpiece on him, he repeated the lines to a script person a couple of times and then he was set for the rest of the day." Bogart explained that this more spontaneous method worked because he and Hepburn aimed for natural rather than dramatic speech: "We seldom learned our lines [verbatim] for *The African Queen.* Instead we just got the general idea and talked each scene out overlapping one

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another, cutting one another off, as people do in everyday conversation."

Hepburn played her part with dour seriousness until Huston suggested how to make her character more comical and congenial. He reminded her that Eleanor Roosevelt always smiled when she visited soldiers in hospitals and told her, when condescending to Bogart's character, to imitate that ladylike "society smile." Hepburn effectively used the familiar gesture in an exotic context and felt that his "awfully clever piece of direction" enhanced her performance. Huston—who didn't use a storyboard, a daily plan, or a list of shots—was "the most laid-back director" Jack Cardiff, the cameraman, had ever worked with. Nothing bothered him and he was always perfectly calm. He even fished while shooting a scene and when Hepburn complained, said: "Honey, I'm listening. You're doing just great!"

Bogart told Cardiff: "Listen, Jack—you see my face. It's got a lot of lines and wrinkles on it. I've been cultivating them for years, and I like them. They are *me*—so don't try and light them out and make me look like a goddam fag." As Allnutt, Bogart has the same prominent front teeth, scruffy beard, and ragged clothes as Fred C. Dobbs in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre,* but his personality is completely different. He wears a convict-like striped shirt, red neckerchief, black-brimmed torn white cap, stained white trousers, and canvas shoes. He is very nimble on the boat. Dobbs longs for a cigarette butt that is snatched up by a street urchin at the beginning of the Mexican picture; Allnutt's casually discarded cigar at the start of *The African Queen* stampedes the natives out of the Sunday morning service conducted by the Reverend Samuel Sayer (played by Robert Morley). Morley's scenes were shot in London, his African congregation was shot on location, and the two separate parts were convincingly spliced together.

The film begins as the German troops burn down an African village and drive out the natives; it ends as a German gunboat, struck by a home-made torpedo, suddenly explodes. There's a great deal of water in between the two fires (some eight hundred gallons were poured on Hepburn in the London studio). Allnutt's boat, in alternating scenes of crisis and calm, navigates the swirling river, slips past the German fort, and sails into the lake to carry out its mission. The essence of this wonderfully comic film is the contrast between the two spikey, middle-aged characters. Isolated on the boat, they find it difficult to maintain the proprieties, and they clash bitterly as she condemns his character and spurs him into action, while he mocks her affected speech and resists her orders. After overcoming a series of increasingly perilous obstacles, each one bringing them closer together, they transcend their differences of class and character. As her brittle crust melts and reveals an emotional core, they fall in love.

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The main conflict concerns Allnutt's sensible opposition to Rosie's madcap plan to sink the German ship. She tries to shame him, in her most patronizing schoolmarm manner, by asking: "In other words, you are refusing to help your country in her hour of need, Mr. Allnutt?" But he continues to ignore her commands, while fortifying himself with ample quantities of gin, and does a witty imitation of her high and mighty airs:

> "I mean we ain't goin' to do nothin' of the sort."
> "Why, of *course* we're going! What an absurd idea!"
> "What an absurd idea! What an absurd idea! Lady, I may be a born fool, but you get ten absurd idears to my one, an' don't you forget it!"

When she calls him a liar and a coward, he lashes out with a caustic analysis of her character. "'Oose boat *is* this, any'ow? 'Oo asked *you* aboard. *Huh? Huh?* You crazy, psalm-singin', skinny old maid."

After this dispute, Rose, acting out Hepburn's real-life fury at Bogart's drinking and needling, pours Allnutt's precious gin into the river and throws the empty bottles overboard. When Rose and Charlie survive the cataracts and gorges, she transcends her puritanical repression and reveals her sexual awakening by confessing she had loved the excitement: "I'd never dreamed that any—any mere—er—physical experience could be so *stimulating*. . . . So *exhilarating*." When they pass the last obstacle, through a combination of his mechanical ability and her plucky imagination, he exclaims, "Can't 'ardly tell water from land—or for that matter, day from night," and she replies: "The whole thing is like a fever dream, isn't it?" In the thrill of the moment he embraces and kisses her. She is transformed and responsive, but he's shocked and appalled at first by his own rash behavior. After their lovemaking, she serves him "breakfast in bed." Filled with joy, he does an imitation of the hippos and monkeys they see on the banks of the river.

The weakest part of the picture is the contrived conclusion. Charlie loads his boat with explosives and intends to ram the Germans. But before he can do so, the boat is swamped and overturned during a storm on the lake. They manage to swim away from their capsized craft, but are captured and taken aboard the enemy ship. As in *Casablanca* (where he answers "Drunkard") and in *Passage to Marseilles* (where he answers "Eskimo"), an officer once again asks his nationality and he reluctantly replies: "English." They are sentenced to death for spying, but the captain agrees to Charlie's sentimental request to marry them before they are hanged. After a brief ceremony he exclaims: "I now pronounce you man and wife. Proceed with the execution."

At this very moment the *Queen Louisa* runs into the abandoned

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African Queen and is blown up. Charlie and Rose jump ship, swim toward the shore, and glide out of the last frame. Huston's script girl, Angela Allen, noting the director's characteristic restlessness and inability to perfect his work, observed that he was "bent on self-destruction. So frequently in his pictures he made a wonderful film, but when it came to the end he did something that kind of blew it. And he knew that he was doing it. . . . He got too bored to think up a good end. It wasn't on a par with the rest of the film. It's a wonderful picture, but the end is a bore." Audiences, however, liked the upbeat conclusion. The picture cost $4 million to make and earned more than $40 million.

During his long career Bogart had developed a sophisticated and ambivalent attitude toward his profession and his role in it. He laughed at starstruck idolaters and disliked the spurious glamour of the film industry. He often attacked the blatant stupidity, the meretricious beauty, and the fatuous egoism of his colleagues: "Most of the actresses in Hollywood are the dumbest broads in town and ninety percent have no sex appeal. . . . Most of the stars bore me—always blabbing about their latest movies." Accustomed to fame as a child, when his portrait had been used to advertise baby food, he mocked the inflated importance of the Academy Awards and in 1949 invented the Oscar for Animals. Pard, Bogart's unlucky dog in *High Sierra,* was a strong contender, but he gave the first two prizes to Asta, the wire-haired terrier in *The Thin Man,* and to the impressively stolid water buffalo in *The Good Earth.*

In March 1950, the year before he made *The African Queen,* he once again attacked the Awards and caustically commented: "It's about time someone stuck a pin in the Oscar myth and let out all that hot air contained in the Academy Awards. . . . The only answer [to who is best] would be to have everyone perform the same role. One year you could have all the actors play *Hamlet* and all the actresses do *Mildred Pierce*" (Joan Crawford's popular tearjerker of 1945). Richard Brooks's novel *The Producer* portrays another conversation in which Bogart, in the guise of the character Taggart, attacks the Award:

> "I've a great script for you to do," Matt told Taggart. "It's about coal."
> "I'm tired of looking filthy in pictures," said Taggart.
> "This'll get you the Academy Award," said Matt.
> "Skip the commercials," said Taggart.
> "On the level, baby. This'll get you the Award."
> "That's no incentive," said Taggart. "The best people never get 'em. Did Cary Grant ever get one? Did Chaplin? Did Bogart?" Taggart went on belittling Academy Award winners, his bitterness stemming from the fact that he had never won one.

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Bogart thought *The African Queen*—in which he was at once adventurous, comic, and romantic—was his best film. It got four Academy Award nominations: for actor, actress, director, and screenplay. After all his mockery of the Award, he realized that he would very much like to win. When the picture was completed, Sam Spiegel's publicist told Bogart that the public relations firm Cleary, Strauss & Irwin could help him get the Oscar. It was common, then as now, for actors to hire a company to campaign on their behalf. John Strauss came from the same background as Bogart and had gone to Exeter, but since he did not drink, his convivial partner Frederic Cleary seemed best qualified to handle their client. Anxious to maintain his persona, Bogart made it plain to Cleary that he didn't want anyone to know he was pushing for the Award. They decided on a subtle campaign that quietly planted favorable stories in the gossip columns instead of taking out big ads in the trade papers. John Strauss said that no one ever found out about it.

Bogart seemed to have been chasing the seven-pound, gold-plated brass statue (the same weight as his daughter Leslie, born in August 1952) for as long as Sydney Greenstreet had pursued the Maltese falcon. In "The Oscar Myth," an article published in *Cosmopolitan*, he wrote: "I have been up for an Academy Award twice, and I struck out both times. The first time was in 1936, when I was nominated for a supporting award for playing Duke Mantee in *The Petrified Forest*." Though he had *not* been nominated in 1936 (no one on *Cosmopolitan* had bothered to check this), he had been nominated for *Casablanca* in 1943, when Paul Lukas won for *Watch on the Rhine*.

In March 1952 the screenwriter Nunnally Johnson hired a limousine and, as the beams of the huge arc lights swept the night sky above Hollywood, accompanied Bogart and Bacall to the Awards ceremony at the Pantages Theater. Marlon Brando, who that year played Stanley Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, was the favorite for the best actor award, but recognition for Bogart was long overdue. Usually cool and detached on such occasions, he was obviously very excited that night, nervously moving his hands as he talked. When Greer Garson announced his name as the winner, he was ecstatic. He walked stiffly across the stage and momentarily turned his back to the audience as he accepted the statue she held out to him.

After Claire Trevor had been nominated for *Key Largo*, she had asked Bogart, "What do I say if I win?" Bogart, condemning the usual gushing response, urged her to "Just say you did it all yourself and don't thank anyone." He planned to say the same thing if he won. But when it came time to speak, he couldn't help thanking those he knew had made his fine performance possible. He said: "It's a long way from

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the Belgian Congo to the stage of this theatre. It's nicer to be here. Thank you very much. . . . No one does it alone. As in tennis, you need a good opponent or partner to bring out the best in you. John and Katie helped me to be where I am now." Despite his apparent disdain for the Oscars, which Bogart felt intensified the anxiety of a nervous profession, recognition, when it came, was sweet.

Hold It!

BYRON DOBELL

"All photographs are posed,"
said Cartier-Bresson.
"It is the photographer who poses."
(Actually, it wasn't Cartier-Bresson,
it was yours truly. I put my best
thoughts into the mouths of other people
and then sue them for plagiarism.)

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LETTER FROM SARAJEVO

Art Out of Rubble

JULIE LASKY

The Holiday Inn in Sarajevo is an irregular cube of a building. Portions of its exterior were sliced away by design long before the hotel began to be shelled. Even in the best of times, it must have resembled a corporate headquarters more than a tourist spot. In the worst of times, the road outside was renamed Sniper Alley, and a sign posted across from the hotel urged passersby to run "or R.I.P."

When I visited Sarajevo in June 1996 to write about the city's artistic culture, the times were neither the best nor the worst, and the shiny yellow hotel reflected their uncertainty. In a landscape of office towers that looked as though giant birds had swooped down and plucked out the windows, the familiar script logo attached to the street side of the Holiday Inn seemed as foreign to the environment as it did to the architecture. Outside, a woman in camouflage patrolled the grounds with a German shepherd. Inside, a cavernous lobby sparkled optimistically with glass.

With all the pain of restored circulation following a long period of numbness, Sarajevo, six months after the war in Bosnia had ended, was returning to life. Water was available at least half the day, and storefronts displayed merchandise as fast as their broken windows could be mended. Songs that had been popular in America a few years before erupted from dozens of cafés. Yet, for all its spastic vigor, the city was still no place for a holiday; and at more than two hundred dollars a night, the Holiday Inn catered mostly to businessmen and government officials. Taking a detour from the daily press briefings held next door, I passed such people almost every morning for a month. They were scattered like crumbs among the lobby's upholstery, wearing suits and drinking espresso from a bar set up several yards from the reception desk. Though they spoke in many different languages, they seemed to come from the same place as I—a foreign country with at least a few unanxious citizens and the easy opportunity to come and go as one pleased; it didn't much matter which country in particular. I liked being in the undifferentiated and self-absorbed company of these people. It was one of the few times in Sarajevo that I felt anonymous without feeling alone.

After circling the lobby, and perhaps drinking a cup of coffee myself, I returned home: back along Sniper Alley, past the remnants of the Red Cross building and the shell of the central post office along the Miljacka River, left through the old town, up the hill of Logavina Street, and finally to the kitchen of my landlady, Jela Dzino, where I sat at a table covered with a plastic sheet as she prepared eggs or sausages for lunch.

I went to Sarajevo last summer the way other people jump off planes or have children—with a sense of plunging into the unknown and, ultimately, with a belief in the futility of any real preparation. I was interested in seeing what the effects on the arts would be of a community in extreme crisis. The idea had begun to take shape in 1994, when the graphic arts magazine where I edit published postcards designed by two young Sarajevan artists who cribbed pop icons, such as Superman and the Hollywood sign, and twisted them into pleas for military intervention. One postcard showed a chicken soup can punctured with bullet holes—the word "Sarajevo" replaced "Campbell's." This reference to Andy Warhol was as ironic as the act of printing postcards in a country without a working postal system. Pop art adopted and criticized the language of consumerism; in

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Sarajevo, there was nothing to consume. The irony doubled back onto itself, for these postcards, far from being dead letters, were reproduced in magazines and newspapers throughout the world. The artists, Bojan Hadzihalilovic and Dada Durakovic, left the besieged city to mount exhibitions in Slovenia and Switzerland, but always returned. Why? I asked the man who first brought their work to my attention, an instructor at the Sarajevo art academy who had emigrated to Nebraska during the war. Cedomir Kostovic shrugged, chewed a mouthful of lunch at the New York City restaurant where we met, and said that he also found the artists' willingness to stay put a mystery.

Bojan and Dada remained in my thoughts as the continuing saga of human rights abuses in Bosnia was leavened with stories about how local artists, working alone or with such international figures as Susan Sontag, had been drawing crowds to plays, concerts, and exhibitions. Many questioned the motives of celebrities who slipped into wartime Sarajevo and slipped out with burnished reputations, but the effect seemed to give voice to the artists and comfort to their audiences. I recalled that after the Los Angeles riots in 1992, ruined neighborhoods became decorated with murals and posters. Almost overnight, parts of the city had been transformed into a canvas. Was something aesthetic also being made, both physically and metaphorically, out of Sarajevo's rubble? And would it endure after the war was over?

In January 1996, I made arrangements for my trip through the International Rescue Committee, a relief agency with which I had volunteered my services. After a series of phone conversations with staff at IRC's New York headquarters, it was agreed that I would assist Mark Bartolini, the agency's press liaison in Sarajevo. I read up on Balkan politics and took out evacuation insurance. At my request, IRC's New York office faxed me a list of suggested items to take. The list, which had been compiled during the war, included notepaper, a first-aid kit, and spices. Carrying two suitcases, one packed with rugged clothes and another filled with pharmaceuticals and books, I boarded a plane in the last week of May for Prague, and another, four days later, for Split, on the Dalmatian coast of Croatia. There, I was met by an IRC driver, who brought me to a pension on the Adriatic.

Served wine on a terrace decorated with pots of geraniums, I felt not much closer to Bosnia than I had in the States. I heard the shouts of children running along the gravelly beach below. A cat lay sleeping at my feet. Then an American woman sat down at my table with her six-year-old son, whose hair looked white against his sun-browned skin. The woman introduced herself as Diana, an IRC worker in the Split office, who would soon be transferred to Sarajevo. The child began chatting with the driver in Serbo-Croatian (or Croatian, as I had been advised to call it—the language keeps its essential character throughout much of the former Yugoslavia, but changes names as one crosses borders). "Speak in English," his mother urged gently. The child made a retort I didn't understand. "He says, why? He is a Croat," interpreted the driver. "I don't know what will happen to him when we get to Bosnia," Diana sighed.

The next day, I crossed the border between Croatia and Bosnia, but went only as far as Zenica, less than an hour northwest of Sarajevo. My companion on this leg of the journey was Nan, who had just arrived from New York to be IRC's financial administrator in the region and was making her first stop in Zenica to visit the agency's office there. Nan was a plainspoken vegetarian who had packed enough alfalfa seeds to guarantee a supply of sprouts for the winter. Driving over the narrow mountain roads, she yelled obscenities like a New York City taxi driver at the cars that sped around us on curves. We passed armored personnel carriers, Red Cross trucks, wooden carts piled with hay, and, soon, deserted villages whose houses had been destroyed by shells that left wide circles in the terra-cotta roofs.

After a few hours, the Bosnian driver leading the way in his own vehicle pulled up at a busy village café for lunch. Plates of roasted lamb were brought to us, and Nan picked at the bread. The driver indicated a ruin in a field across the road. "Hospital," he said. "Finished." In the same broken English he explained that his own children lived nearby. I struggled to remember some Serbo-Croatian words I had studied. "Muz?" (Man?), I asked, meaning boys. I extended a flat palm downward to indicate the size of a child. "Zena?" (Woman?). I suddenly remembered that the same words, *muz* and *zena*, also meant *husband*

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and *wife*. "No *zena*," the driver said, ignoring the gesture. "Finished."

Almost a week after I had set out from Chicago, I reached Sarajevo. A third IRC driver pointed like a tour guide to the crushed and blackened buildings that surged up as we approached the outskirts. He had apparently done this many times before. "Baby hospital . . . Olympic stadium . . . Chetniks [the name commonly used for Serbian nationalists] shoot in these towers. . . ." From the moment I entered the city, I became conscious of the physical. Architecture was interpretable by the insults it had withstood; even monumental, anonymous Socialist buildings took on character through the infinitely varied patterns of war damage. I was fortunate to travel in a car with UN plates that allowed me to cross borders freely. But the reality for most Sarajevans lay in inertia. To move one's maimed body up a hill was laborious. To move a package through the regular mails was still impossible. A two-tiered society existed in which the elites had mobility and access to all forms of communication, while the majority were locked into stasis and frustrated transmissions. In this world of checkpoints and egregiously biased news sources, art mediated between Sarajevo and the rest of the world. It was a proxy for those who could not leave. For some, like Bojan and Dada, it was an exit visa.

Through form or execution, deliberately or amateurishly, every cultural artifact I saw over the next four weeks showed the struggle of being made or perceived under such difficult circumstances. Collectively, they all turned out to be about the war, even when they had been created in other places and times. Paintings, performances, wall graphics, street music embedded copious allusions to Western culture, from Michelangelo to Jurassic Park. And yet I found the Sarajevans sealed off to me by their trauma, and their most global cultural references impenetrably layered. This first became apparent at a conference held at the Holiday Inn in early June, which proposed that culture, though used as a pretext for exclusion and intolerance, was a universal language that could bridge different ethnicities and religions. To make the point, a group of musicians launched the event—it was sponsored by the France-based European Mozart Foundation—with a performance of Mozart's Quartet in D for Flute and Strings. After the music stopped, Ivan Cicek, a human rights activist from Zagreb, spoke of the "personal feeling of enormous sadness and almost cynical madness" thinking "of a previous Karadzic who has a monument in the center of Vienna, near Mozart's home. At the time this music was played, he brought 6,000 troops and eradicated Sarajevo."

Since most of my impressions came from photographs taken during the war, I was surprised that so much of the city seemed, on panoramic view, to be intact, if badly scarred. Driving into the old town, I saw delicate minarets enclosed by scaffolding, a chipped but solid Roman Catholic church, rows of nineteenth-century buildings festooned with details molded in plaster and gouged by mortar shells. Sculptures carved in relief over doorways—men and women and the occasional lion—symbolically bore the weight of cantilevered upper floors. Many of these atlases and caryatids were missing limbs, a material echo of the dozens of wounded people on the streets. I later learned that, though no reliable count had been made, an estimated third of Sarajevo's population had been injured.

Because every photograph I had seen had been in black and white, the neutral tones of reportage, I wasn't prepared for the bright purple paint on storefronts and playground equipment, or the different colored berets identifying the nationalities of NATO's IFOR soldiers, who strolled around with semi-automatic rifles slung across their backs. Women of all ages wore hot pinks and yellows; the head scarves of traditional Muslim dress came in a range of colors and patterns. Only rarely did I see women swathed in black, like walking obelisks with eyes. The mountains surrounding the city were steeper and closer than I had imagined and had been stripped of trees for firewood as far as the Serb front lines, so that their greens split into patches of light and dark.

At the IRC office on Strosmajerova Street, Mark Bartolini, a man in his thirties with coils of silver in his dark hair, sat before a laptop computer in a room with freshly painted walls. He had been promoted, as I knew, from his press job to a higher administrative position, but a new press liaison had not been hired. Because of this, he apologized that there was really nothing for me to do in the meantime. Could I keep myself busy with my own work? I

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had more than a dozen rolls of film and a Serbo-Croatian grammar book. I just needed a place to start. He advised me to go to the National Library a few blocks away. Four years after the library had been bombarded, much of the interior still lay in a pile inside its fancifully ornamented shell. Plans to rebuild were under way, though many Sarajevans would have liked to keep the library in its present state as a memorial. To get there, I passed through the Bascarsija, the antique Muslim quarter with low arcaded buildings and cobblestone streets, where vendors sold pistachios and gold jewelry. When I arrived at the library, I found a tourist couple videotaping their child as he sat in the middle of the ruin, picking up and tossing stones.

Mark had already arranged for my lodgings with a couple who rented a wing of their red stucco house in the old town. Jela and Zijo Dzino, my hosts, had been in their kitchen at 29 Logavina, when it was hit by a shell early in the war. Both were hospitalized. One of the first things Jela did on meeting me was to hike her skirt and show a thick leg with chunks of flesh missing. A Croatian woman in her late fifties, she had a voice that was harsh and, when directed at me, slow—she was uncannily good at getting a point across, though she spoke very little English. Zijo, a small, antic Muslim man five years older, was less telepathically gifted. He knew four words of German that did much work in our conversations: *schlaffen*, *gut* (these two were usually combined in a question each morning), *kinder*, and *kaput*.

The couple lived off government pensions amounting to a few hundred dollars a year, and they took in tenants. (The *Philadelphia Inquirer* correspondent Barbara Demick had stayed with them for four months while writing a series of articles about the families on Logavina Street, which she later collected into a book.) More income came from the sale of the silver-inlaid jewelry Zijo made. Deutsche marks continued to be traded in the shattered economy; Bosnian dinars were acceptable mainly in the public markets. To economize, the couple turned their walled garden into a cornucopia from which Jela plucked much of what we ate: beans, potatoes, strawberries, lettuce, sprigs of mint, a special variety of rose she made into juice. Some mornings I would find her picking the stems out of a pile of coffee beans. Jela roasted the beans in the oven, turning and shaking the pan every few minutes until they turned from green to dark brown. One day I came down as she was preparing pastry for baklava, draping dough over a wooden dowel and agitating the stick until gravity pulled the dough into sheets.

After reading posters and graffiti, I learned a few more things about Sarajevo's culture. *Showgirls* was being featured at the movie theater on Marshal Tito Boulevard. Down the street, the newly opened Iranian Cultural Embassy had mounted a photographic tribute to the Ayatollah Khomeini. Seats were still available to a Bosnian comedy, whose title was translated for me as "Run Away from Husband." Soccer teams and American rock bands were obsessions of local youth. Near the Holiday Inn, a mural painted with abstract balloon shapes in violet and aqua ran along the ruin of a hospital-supply building and continued through a doorway into a ground-level room. In the shadows, I could just make out the imitation Lascaux cave painting of a hunter stalking a woolly mammoth. It seemed to be just one more example of local black humor, like the coinage "Sarajevo rose" to refer to the circular pattern of dents left by a mortar shell after it strikes pavement, or the popularity of the song "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life," originally sung by a chorus of crucified Judeans in the Monty Python movie *Life of Brian*. This mural, however, had been the work of a group of visiting French artists a couple of years before. No one I spoke with seemed to know much about it.

Before I left the United States, Cedomir had given me a list of Sarajevan artists. The first name on the list was Amra Zulfikarpasic, an instructor at the Sarajevo art academy. I phoned her, and got a lively voice that mixed up English pronouns (inanimate objects were usually feminine). Amra offered to meet me the next evening at the foot of Logavina Street. A stylishly dressed woman showed up a few minutes late. She had dyed red hair and high cheekbones under sunglasses, and I was shocked when she mentioned a granddaughter.

Her attractiveness reminded me painfully of my own dowdiness. Nothing had prepared me for the elegance of the women in Sarajevo, which was far more pronounced than what I saw on the streets of Prague. I often heard stories about the lengths to which some

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women went to groom themselves during the war—how they were tormented with the choice between drinking precious water and using it to wash their hair, and how they could be seen running from snipers' bullets in high heels. Some Sarajevan artists later spoke of doing their nails under siege the way they spoke of painting or writing—as an act of defiance. They wanted to prove that they did not deserve to be rounded up and slaughtered like animals, they said. I wondered, too, whether a reverse logic was at work and whether they unconsciously believed grooming had talismanic powers to protect them from danger. An art student named Ajla described the wonderful day a NATO worker, who had access to military flights in and out of the city, returned with a handful of temporary tattoos for sale. She showed me a picture of herself with hair swept over her face and a bird tattoo exposed like a delicate wound under her collarbone.

Amra was the niece of a prominent Muslim politician. Before the war, she had been an art director for the largest advertising agency in Bosnia. When the agency collapsed (with the modern office building that housed it), she designed signs for factories and medical clinics, bartering her services for three kilos of spaghetti or twenty bottles of beer. During and since the war, she had created graphics for each of the major political parties of the Serbs, Muslims, and Croats. "My friends laugh about this way of working for anyone that will pay. What do you call her?" she asked. "Mercenary?" I offered. "Yes," she said with satisfaction. "I was sick of being hungry."

Amra mounted two art exhibitions during the war. The first was called "Friendship Is a Golden Thread," after a children's song. She invited people to her home and distributed the contents of a food parcel sent by a former business partner who had escaped to Serbia. "I wanted people to know my friend was thinking of me," she explained. Her second show took place in an art gallery on a frigid December day in 1994. Inspired by the grief that overwhelmed her when she heard "Yesterday" on the radio, she made six large collages, each alluding to a Beatles song, and petitioned NATO for a few hours of electricity to exhibit them. She later showed me a videotape. The event looked much like any New York art opening, where well-dressed people pay more attention to one another than to whatever is hanging on the walls. A crowd of thin Sarajevans shivered and chatted in a large room. Several joked about who would eat the real slices of pie attached to a collage called "All You Need Is Love."

As I watched the tape, I remembered a comment made by Zdravko Grebo, a lawyer and director of an independent radio station in Sarajevo. Speaking at the Holiday Inn conference, he said, "Sarajevo, neither prior to the war, nor now, was the cultural center of the world. Now there is a paradox: People are transforming their sufferings into a cultural product. And the world, because of its bad conscience, is buying it and lowering the criteria." There was truth in Grebo's disparagement. Much of the artwork I saw, including Amra's, revealed more enthusiasm than ability. But it was also clear that a great deal had been made as part of a community-wide dialogue, not just for sympathetic foreigners. Shared experiences of terror and deprivation inflected these projects. Commercial icons—I thought again of the Warholian soup can—expressed nostalgia for the brief flowering of capitalism between Tito and the war. And the banality of these symbols seemed to reassure Sarajevans, whose dangerous and erratic lives led them to value ordinary, familiar things. Amra's exhibition brought people together in a parody of normal social engagement; indeed, without critics, art buyers, or even a few days to display the work, the very idea of a gallery opening seemed farcical. And yet the visitors who risked their lives to be there apparently considered the event worth dying for. These circumstances added ethical weight and aesthetic texture to the gathering, lifting it out of the mundane and into a realm that might itself be called art.

Through Amra, I met Bojan Hadzihalilovic and Dada Durakovic. Every day, they could be found with a group of friends talking above the New Wave music from the seventies that was a favorite at Café Lora. This tiny place in a courtyard off Marshal Tito Boulevard was popular among Sarajevo's artists. People began to gather in the late afternoon. By evening the café was so packed, they would sit on the ledge in front, alternating Scotch with espresso and smoking relentlessly. Shortly before eleven, the crowd thinned, as the convivial, stylish men and women rushed home to beat curfew. Any Sarajevan found on the

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streets after eleven was held in a police station until dawn.

Bojan and Dada had been known mainly for designing record albums for rock bands. Sarajevo was something of a magnet for contemporary musicians, comparable in many ways to Seattle. During the war, they designed political and cultural magazines that were being gamely produced in Bosnia even then. Handsome and energetic, the couple was sought out for interviews by the *New Republic* journalist Anna Husarska and CNN correspondent Christiane Amanpour. A reporter and photographer from *Life* magazine trailed them for a few days, though the magazine's interest was less in their work than in their wedding. (Bojan, who is half-Jewish, half-Muslim, and Dada, who is Croatian, were married in April 1993.) After the war, when limited postal service was restored, the couple designed a series of stamps with pictures of destroyed monuments—including the central post office. When I met them, they had just printed a small book of poems called *Ti-Rex*. The title referred to dinosaurs only secondarily. Its primary allusions were to the poet's dog, Rex, and to the material on which the book was printed, toilet paper. The poet had insisted his poems didn't deserve better, but Bojan explained that toilet paper had been scarce and valuable during the war and that it, in fact, added dignity.

"The war was like twenty-four-hour-a-day sex," Bojan told me one evening at Lora. He seemed to mean that it had been a constant source of energy that fixed his attention on the present because he thought there might well be no future. In the absence of regular work, when time took on a maddeningly elastic quality, art was therapy. Commenting on the number of memoirs produced by people who had never put pen to paper, Izeta Gradevic, director of the Obala Art Center, an alternative space, said, "It was easier to write reality, than to live it. Writing added a certain distance to life." Suada Kapic, a former television producer, described a typical day under siege: three hours to collect wood and water and then the rest of the day to go out of one's mind with boredom. With funds from UNESCO, she wrote and published the *Sarajevo Survivor's Guide*, a wryly humorous book about the struggle to cope under siege, which was distributed in the U.S. and Japan. Then, in September 1995, she produced a single number of a magazine that borrowed the logo and oversized format of *Life* magazine from the 1950s.

Suada admired the way *Life* packaged global events and introduced them to American coffee tables—before there was television. Her magazine featured dozens of painters, writers, actors, and film directors who remained in Sarajevo during the war. Each artist answered the same terse questions, including "Do you need hope to live?" and "How would you like to die?" Suada thought the responses sufficiently upbeat to be inspiring. When *Life* denied her permission to use the logo, citing trademark protection, she reversed the "*e*," added a copyright symbol, and printed and distributed one thousand copies, including one to *Life*'s New York offices.

A tall, angular Muslim woman who had fled from the Serb-occupied suburb of Grbavica, Suada had a stark view of the past four years. "In Republika Srpska," she said, referring to the Serb-controlled region in Bosnia, "there are horrible scenes, murderous terrorists without culture. In Sarajevo, resistance was totally based on civilization. Public opinion in Europe and America recognized that true art emanated from Sarajevo. It was good foreign policy." She had lost not only her Grbavica flat but a family home in the north of Bosnia. Like many Sarajevans, she held fast to ideas of goodness and truth—especially truth—as among the few sources of stability left. Objectivity was searingly important to Suada. She took one thousand photographs of Sarajevo under siege to furnish evidence of what had happened against the muddled and contradictory accounts of the war, and for that matter, of all Balkan history. She was infatuated with formats like handbooks and news magazines that delivered facts. When I met her, she had completed a map of Sarajevo's principal bombing sites, with information about the buildings that had been destroyed. The graphics were pastel and whimsical, in the way of tourist brochures. And though she was careful not to be inflammatory—the text referred to "aggressors" rather than Serbs or Chetniks—this understatement, like the visual presentation, had the effect, as she probably knew, of making the work more credible.

Like Bojan and Dada, Suada had the chance to leave Sarajevo. Film festivals, publishing

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companies, and galleries around the world coveted not just the work of Sarajevan artists, but their presence. When a cultural organization sponsored a trip abroad, the surreal journey began with a dash across the airport runway to the Bosnian-held suburb on the other side. The artists had to evade both snipers' bullets and the French UN troops who controlled the airport. (The Serbs allowed the airport to stay open under the condition that civilians not be allowed to escape by that route.) Once out, they were showered with attention in placid, luxurious capitals. The dissonance was overwhelming. Amra, who went to London to promote a documentary film, recalled walking into the Sainsbury department store and bursting into tears at the sight of the merchandise. Suada described her thoughts on coming back from a book-promotion tour in Tokyo: "I had been on the top of the world, and now I was at the ends of the earth."

Why did they return? The artists I spoke to gave several reasons: family, the precarious life of a refugee, belief in their power to help preserve Sarajevo's multicultural society or to compel outsiders to prevent further partitioning. The film producer Ismet Arnautalic said of his many wartime trips to Western Europe and America, "I always had a stronger wish to come back than go out. I can't breathe outside for more than 20 days." The first time he tried to return to Sarajevo, after a trip to Italy, UN troops refused to let him cross back over the airport's tarmac. After several attempts, Arnautalic simply ran one hundred meters, then changed direction, at which point, a soldier from the other side picked him up and brought him into town.

Inside, he and other artists had adapted to new forms of media and found new chances for expression. From an art student named Alma Fazlic, who made clothes out of remnants of curtains and bedspreads and participated in the first fashion show produced in Sarajevo, to Arnautalic, who turned to documentary filmmaking during the war and ended up at Cannes, they were good at reshaping fragmented experience. And they offered some hope of sustaining the arts once international attention shifted elsewhere. After seeing several of Arnautalic's finely crafted documentaries and learning that his production company, SAGA, was completing its first feature film since the war, I thought it reasonable to imagine the beginning of a film industry in Sarajevo, if the political situation could permit one.

In the meantime, all of this work was being done with foreign support, and there was concern about what would happen when Sarajevo was no longer a cause célèbre of the West. The city was returning to a relative, qualified normalcy that was in some ways as surreal as wartime experience. A more conventional sense of time was restored, but the future remained uncertain. Between the return of Sarajevans who had fled the city and the placement of refugees from outside, there were tremendous housing shortages and few jobs. Foreign agencies were busily preparing for elections that even members of their own staffs considered premature. Judging from the empty seats at the Holiday Inn's briefing room, journalists were looking elsewhere for news. Still, the arts had many international sponsors. An Embassy of Local Democracy (ALD) had just been established by the city of Barcelona as part of a two-year program to invigorate business and culture. (Other cities in Western Europe had pledged to set up ALDs in counterpart cities in Bosnia, but by June only Bologna had followed suit, with Tuzla.) The ALD's opening was marked with a weeklong arts festival, including a salsa concert, fashion show, and screening of the Academy Award-winning movie *Belle Epoque*. Artists welcomed these events like transfusions of an exotic blood type.

It was clear that artists helped divert many people, not just themselves, from unhappiness. Nor was it merely the high-profile appearances of Susan Sontag or Zubin Mehta that drew crowds through shelling and sniping. A staff worker at the Bosnian Culture Center told me that the organization had sponsored sixty-five events in the past year involving folklore, music, literature, or the graphic arts. About one hundred thousand people attended. Months after the war ended, I found myself pressed against the back wall of a theater or locked in a corner of an exhibition space, competing for oxygen with the crowds.

The artists' power to sway as well as divert was, obviously, harder to calculate. Izeta Gradevic suggested that, despite the horrifying news footage that came out of the war, art is

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ultimately better than journalism at raising concern. News reports are homogeneous and become numbing, she said. "When you face an art form, it is not easy to escape death."

I had checked my emotional responses at every turn in Sarajevo and wondered why they often seemed deficient. Was it a reaction to the mechanical narration of people who had told their stories to dozens of journalists? Was it in steely anticipation of being accused of being too healthy, too mobile, too chubby, too voyeuristic, too American, too complicit in the dismembering of Bosnia?—accusations, of course, that never came. Whatever appropriate feelings I thought I lacked, they were not restored by art, and clearly not by a roomful of caged birds made by a sculptor who said he had stopped creating human forms during the war. Nor by a short film called "I Burnt Legs" that told the story of a young man who worked at a hospital carting bags of amputated limbs to the incinerator. Whether the works were hackneyed or accomplished, public or private, they shared the intimacy of common suffering. Though they sought a lingua franca in their transcultural references, they remained as obscure to me as the speech acts in my dreams. They were at once familiar and unfathomable, overlaid with meaning that didn't coincide with the source. Looking at them, I felt indeed like a voyeur, but with an imperfect understanding of anatomy.

Sensation came from an unexpected quarter. One evening, as I walked along the river to a movie theater where a series of French films had been playing, I looked up to take in yet another view of broken cornices and blown-out windows and then felt the ground disappear from below me as I tripped over an open manhole. Peering down I saw I had barely avoided falling into a six-foot pit lined with broken bricks and glass. My injuries amounted to a twisted ankle and a few scrapes, but I went into a kind of shock. I should have turned back to Logavina Street, but instead, I limped to the theater. Walking silently alongside me for the quarter-mile was a man who had seen me fall and crossed the road to help. He was all bones and broken teeth, and he moved almost as painfully as I did. He said nothing, respecting that I simply needed to continue walking. It was almost the summer solstice. The light slanted down in cut ribbons. The shadows throbbed. The city was no longer a map of bombing sites, but a place where people hobbled in quiet sympathy. I didn't need to authenticate my experience by being among them, certainly not by finding danger on the streets of Sarajevo in such an absurd manner, but I had seen much and had much left to feel. It was better, limping along the street together, looking down this time, and watching every inexorable step along the way.

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The Poetry of Violence

JOHN P. SISK

Given the extent to which technology has made power available and exploitable, especially in the media, the present widespread concern about TV violence comes as no surprise. Something like the National Television Violence Study was inevitable. Bill Carter's story in the February 7, 1996, *New York Times* makes it easy to conclude that this Study will intensify the conflict between the broadcaster and those in favor of some kind of censorship—perhaps by way of a V-chip which will make it possible for parents to shield their children from programs that have high levels of "violence or sexually explicit content." Apparently the study was concerned less with the quantity and explicitness of violence than with the context in which it is presented, particularly when the violence goes unpunished or is not punished immediately enough.

In a subsequent meeting with President Clinton, representatives of the major production studios, cable companies, and broadcast television networks agreed to work out a ratings system by January 1997. Understandably, however, they found it hard to separate the idea of a V-chip (the president was in favor of it) from an infringement of their First Amendment rights to free speech. Here their advantage is a clarifying reduction of the issue to a conflict between liberating and restrictive forces. Unfortunately, the clarification comes at the expense of ignoring the fact that life, given its time- and place-bound nature, is a continuum of violence: controlled or uncontrolled, implied or explicit, life-oriented or death-oriented, constructive or destructive, liberating or constricting, altruistic or egoistic, clarifying or obfuscating.

The above might suggest that the subject of violence in any context whatever, including that of the World Wide Web, is too complicated for White House conferences and had better be left to the poets. Dylan Thomas, for instance, gets to the heart of the matter when he celebrates the algorithmic process of vital forces in his haunting lyric "The Force that Through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower." Here this force "which drives the water through the rocks" also drives the poet's "green age" and "red blood," while his inability to stir the water in the pool without stirring the quicksand leaves him "dumb to tell the lover's tomb / How at my sheet goes the same crooked worm." The poem celebrates those moments of heightened attention when no V-chip buffers the experience of interrelated life-enhancing forces. That such moments, however potentially violent, can constitute all-consuming experience helps to explain the ease with which, even for a poet, drink, drugs, and sex can pass themselves off as substitutes. They can only do this by having the censoring effect of a V-chip as they protect one, at least for a while, from the demoralizing discovery of the substitute nature of the power he or she has been experiencing.

The Study's linking together of violence and explicit sex is bound to affect TV moguls the way their counterparts in the NRA would be affected if they were told they could keep handguns only if they were willing to give up on assault rifles. Is there a safe middle ground between the polite velleities of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* and Quentin Tarantino's sexually explicit *Pulp Fiction* so that we can enjoy the first without feeling that we are reject-

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ing the passional integrity of the second—to say nothing of the First Amendment that supports it?

We would like to be as indicatively clear about such matters as some of us imagine that Jane Austen was. To judge from reactions to it, however, the Violence Study seems to have had the same problems we have learned to expect from any morally serious study of human behavior: in particular how to take a firm position without setting up your opposition's complaint that you have done violence to the subjunctive dimension of life with its "ifs" and "mights." This opposition includes not only those who are convinced of the slippery relativity of such terms as *violence*, *indecency*, and *obscenity*, but also those who, like the Marquis de Sade or Shakespeare's Iago, are indicatively certain that violence *is*, not *might be*, the only sure way to self-enhancement. This opposition is in a good position to argue, Nietzsche-fashion, that the fear of violence may be nothing more than a life-restricting compulsion that the violently inclined can use to their advantage the way bullies do. The experience of violence, if it is only the violence of a bad temper, can be as indicatively all-consuming as poetry is (there are no subjunctives in Dylan Thomas's poem). Thus war can be an exuberant experience of relief from pre-war subjunctive uncertainties. In fact, it is the cumulative force of such experiences that makes some of us as ill at ease with the fear of violence we see recorded in surveys of public opinion as we are with the living fact of violence.

In these matters, as in most others, our tendency is to define by disjunctives: peace defines war as non-violence defines violence. My correspondence from a national peace movement, for instance, lists sixty-two nationally prominent people, each of whom, "rooted in the gospel message of peace," has the courage to speak the truth despite the consequences. But the consequences of such principled truth speaking, as more than one committed pacifist has discovered, can be the violence of physical confrontation so that they risk ending up in a category with those Palestinian suicide bombers who so conspicuously have the courage to speak the truth despite the consequences. We see the same irony when ardent pro-lifers harass and even do physical harm to the staff and patrons of birth-control clinics. So it is not surprising that among the historians of World War II are those who believe that the atrocities of the Nazis might have been prevented or at least minimized if the Allies hadn't been too adamantly peace-loving to take a firm early stand against Hitler.

The fact that such peace as the world has known seems to have been so intimately and causally involved with the wars that preceded it (or followed it when peace was imprudently used) makes it easy for war lovers to say that the fear of going to war is based on spiritual torpor or failure of nerve. No doubt this explanation will satisfy many of those who see the V-chip as a violent expression of the fear of violence: a craven effort to substitute a technological device for an imaginative and courageous encounter with life in all its complexity. Suppose in an effort to secure a utopianly non-violent community we eliminate the possibility of a future in which the poetic intensities of self-discovery and self-fulfillment are ruled out and TV itself becomes a bland reflection of a pervasive cultural boredom?

In the meantime, violent conduct, like any state of passion, has a poetic capacity to protect itself from damaging questions about motivation and consequence. It is nothing if not poetically vivid, and as such deserves the attention that the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (vol. 65, no. 1, 1993) has given to the differing persuasive powers of vivid and pallid messages. In this defining disjunction, vivid messages are characterized by colorful language, picturesque examples, and provocative metaphors that combine to interfere with the reception and essential meaning of a message and thus reduce its memorability and capacity to persuade. These tested-out conclusions may give little comfort to those who find Dylan Thomas's poem persuasive, but they encourage a modification if not reversal of public opinion about the predicament of our message-crammed society, affected as it is by the poetically violent simplifications of TV, advertising, and talk shows—to say nothing of the vivid rhetoric of democratic politics.

And then, of course, there is the disturbing possibility that the vividness of TV makes for disastrous competition with the pallidness of the formal education that the young must be forced to endure if they are to participate in a democracy. Hillary Clinton seems to have had this possibility in mind when in February 1996 she told a hundred and twenty leaders of the

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National Parent Teacher Association that too much TV can erode children's willingness to take on tough assignments that so often turn out to be "simply hard, boring, repetitive work." The *Journal's* study may make us wonder if we wouldn't have been better off all along if something like a cultural V-chip had confined us in a rhetorically more pallid environment.

Certainly there are times when even great writers (perhaps in reaction to their natural inclination to be poetically vivid) seem to believe this. Michel Montaigne in his famous essay "Of Cannibals," for instance, prefers the account of the New World that he gets from "a plain ignorant fellow" of his acquaintance who had lived there ten or so years to the account he might have gotten from "your better sort of men" who could not avoid glossing upon and altering the story in order "to gain the reputation of men of judgment and the better to induce your faith." Of course the story we get from that plain, ignorant fellow by way of Montaigne is itself fabulous enough. Thanks to John Florio's translation, Shakespeare put it to vivid use in *The Tempest.*

But Montaigne's point is well taken. The better sort of men are more likely than plain ignorant fellows to react like literary artists than newspaper reporters when confronted with the unfamiliar and unprecedented. Being less interested in what *is* than what *might be* if apparent reality is put in the larger context it asks for, they are more likely to resort to the violent distortions of hyperbole. So Friedrich Engels in later years confessed that he and Marx (neither of them plain ignorant fellows) had to overemphasize the economic factor in order to counter the false consciousness of ideology in their opponents. Thus in their dialectic engagement with their opposition, they behaved with the vividness of poets, not the pallidness of scientists, in the interest of publicizing their provocative metaphor of the classless society. Perhaps it is not too much to say that Marx, like Don Quixote, was handicapped in his efforts to change the world by never having ceased to be the poet he was to begin with.

The Socrates of Plato's *Republic* is as suspicious of poets as Montaigne is of the better sort of men. The great storytellers of mankind like Hesiod and Homer, he says, tell lies "not to be lightly told to young and thoughtless persons." Such dangerous entertainments "must not be admitted into our State, whether they are supposed to have an allegorical meaning or not." For him what is most important is that "the tales which the young first hear should be models of virtuous thoughts." Hence, "hymns to the gods and praises of famous men are the only poetry that ought to be admitted into our State." One suspects that he would have judged the "violently or sexually explicit content" of much late-twentieth-century TV to be in its way a kind of totalizing poetic experience that was as incompatible with the needs of the good society as Homer's demeaning tales of the gods and goddesses had been.

Certainly Socrates would have been appalled with the Dionysian entrancements of our own pop music. Perhaps the employment of the V-chip would have seemed to him a move in the right direction, and perhaps too he would have agreed with Hillary Clinton that the fascinating violence of TV was counter-educational. There is, of course, the possibility that we do Socrates an injustice if we reduce him to a hater of poetry when he is really concerned less with the perils of poetry than with the consequences of its Dionysian exclusiveness: as if the good life, being all poetry, would by its very nature resist the pedestrian and life-diminishing intrusion of Apollonian prose. Might he not have foreseen the personal and social consequences when an individual, driven by hubristic ambition, aspires to become himself a work of art?

In any event, Socrates can help us see that behind the National Television Violence Study is the fear that the young, having little natural protection against the false gods and goddesses who subvert rather than serve the best interests of democratic society, are as easily seduced as many of their elders are by the poetry of violence in popular entertainment. In their hunger for that totality of experience in which the state is a work of art, and therefore an environment with utopian possibilities, they still may not grow up to become the impatient democracy-hating fascists that so many literary intellectuals became between the two world wars. But it would be no less disastrous for our common political and social well-being if they were to grow up to discover that democracy, being in its normal operations an aesthetically messy and prose-dependent state

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of affairs, is too pallid to merit their attention. In effect they will have become victims of an attentional V-chip that protects them like a zealous parent from any information that might tempt them to question the integrity of their boredom.

The Glass Sunflower

(For S. C. W.)

MARIAM DUBOVIK

Friends as young women, now
older than it was possible to be,
we meet reluctantly
in the heavy air of the museum.
The glass sunflower we came to see
balances on a squat base.

Casual, we agree to our disguise
of dull hair and loose skin
to be discarded soon,
carelessly flung down
near the bedroom mirror.

At the glass sunflower,
its faceted blaze balanced
on a squat base in grey air,
you measure me, distanced,
as I was and as I am,
as our sun begins to freeze.

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TEACHING

So Long, Maestro

A Portrait of Merle Curti

G. D. LILLIBRIDGE

In early March 1946, my wife and I drove to Madison, Wisconsin, from Vermillion, South Dakota, in what turned out to be the worst snowstorm in seventy-five years. The war was over, time to unload the hostile gear of war and pick up the friendly weapons of the mind—books. I carried a letter of introduction from the historian Herbert Schell of the University of South Dakota to Paul Knaplund, chairman of the History Department at the University of Wisconsin. Knaplund, known behind his back with greater or lesser affection depending on your status with him as Uncle Paul, promptly sent me down the hall to see Merle Curti as soon as he learned I was interested in American social and intellectual history. My ignorance of American history was immediately evident, for I had never heard of Curti. Curti was affability itself in talking with me, and when I mentioned the name of Bert Loewenberg, with whom I had studied as an undergraduate and whom Curti knew well and highly respected, I was immediately accepted into his circle of students. Loewenberg later wrote him a letter about me so full of unwarranted praise that Curti elevated me to some special niche in his mind, more than student, closer to friend and colleague, and ultimately, I think, something else—but more about that presently.

As I look back over the past fifty years, knowing Merle Curti as well as I have, I realize that there were those who envied him, argued with him, were annoyed by him on occasion, were even angry with him now and again, yet I've never heard of anyone who disliked him. This alone made him unusual among historians and probably academics in general. The reason for that, I think, is that for most of his life he was one of those rare creatures whose presence in the world justified the faith of some of us that man is essentially good after all, even though the evidence around us is not particularly convincing. And his life served to link those of us who believed this into a community known as the friends of Merle Curti—people who got along astonishingly well on very short notice and who needed little introduction to one another beyond this.

I remember when, as an uneasy graduate student, I went at his urging to London in the fall of 1948 to do my doctoral research. A flow of letters began from him, each of which contained the suggestion that I call on Harold Laski: "He is very good company," "He will give you good advice," and other such sage commendations. I didn't know Laski from a hole in the ground, and when I inquired and found out who he was, I was even less inclined to take Curti's advice, believing as I did that the intellectual spokesman of the Labour Party would hardly be inclined to give an ignorant American student advice of any kind, except perhaps to stand clear of him. But he kept pushing me, and one day, in a fit of annoyance, I clipped all these unsolicited urgings out of Curti's letters, put them in an envelope, sent them out in the morning post

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to Mr. Laski, and went off to work in the British Museum library. The London postal service being then somewhat more efficient than the American, on my return late that afternoon to my digs (as we Anglophiles say) there was a note from Harold Laski. It simply said: "Any friend of Merle Curti is a friend of mine. Come and see me tomorrow."

The astonishing thing about this capacity of Merle's for friendship was the large number of people who regarded themselves as his best friend. I never looked upon him as my best friend (I already had such a friend with whom I had grown up in a small town in South Dakota), nor do I think he ever regarded me as his best friend. But at his death at the age of ninety-nine in March 1996, when I went to my filing cabinet and pulled out the file of letters from him, I was astonished at their number—the file was a good three inches thick. Over the decades we corresponded frequently and at length. I boxed up these letters and sent them off to Paul Boyer, Merle Curti Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin, who is collecting Curti papers for the archives at the University. In his letter back to me, Boyer wrote: "While he carried on a vast correspondence, the letters to you must be exceptional in their frequency, intimacy, and substance. He clearly had a very special feeling for you and his friendship with you, and this shines through in the letters." Despite the fact that the letters are rich in commentary on historiographical and professional matters as well as on the flow of current events, ours was not what could be regarded as an intellectual friendship.

But there was something extraordinary in our relationship, partly revealed in the tag I early put on him. With my penchant for sobriquets I called him the Maestro, and Maestro he remained for fifty years. What this suggests is that in part I fell into his general concern for his graduate students, all of whom had ample reason to be grateful for his attention. He encouraged his students constantly, promoted their interests, protected them, defended them, funded them on occasion, went to any lengths short of fraud or assassination if it would serve their interests. Any activity in your behalf was better, he felt, than none at all—an attitude more generally associated with the Travelers' Aid Society. But then in a sense we graduate students were all wayward travelers in desperate need of direction.

An amusing demonstration of this for me was the occasion of my oral Ph.D. examination. The Maestro had become convinced that I was sure to fail if I so much as opened my mouth, a judgment not entirely unwarranted. While confident I could write my way through anything, he was far less optimistic about my talking my way past Wisconsin's notorious inquisitors. The Maestro was at his summer home in New Hampshire and I was in Albany, New York, when he decided that the moment of truth had arrived. Nothing would do but for me to finish the dissertation hastily, mail it off, and we would drive to Madison to settle the affair before a committee constituted at the last moment. None of the members, it turned out, had had much of a chance to read the thesis. Nor, as it further turned out, did they get much of a chance to ask me about it. I don't recall saying anything for the first hour. It was a hot, humid afternoon, and the Maestro killed the first twenty minutes opening windows, getting us all to take off our coats, and suggesting other useful, time-consuming activities ("Water, anyone?"). Then he detected a mysterious slight chill coming in off the lake, so we went into the routine in reverse—closed the windows, put our coats back on, etc. Harry Hayden Clark, dragooned onto the committee from American Literature, was clearly wondering what the hell was going on, what sort of rat's maze had he blundered into.

Finally, questions were asked, but before I could respond the Maestro seized upon them, rephrased them several times, and in the process answered them himself. He encouraged a running argument between Clark and Irv Wyllie, then a visiting professor, which lasted half an hour and had nothing to do with the matter at hand. At the very end, the Maestro decided it was safe for me to appear on my own, and he himself posed the question, which dealt with the relationship between an early but well-known article of his and my own work. I had probably read the article half-a-dozen times and indeed had made reference to it in my thesis. But by this time I had become as confused as Clark. My mind went blank, and I couldn't for the life of me recall the article at all (which was not quite as bad as the reaction of a friend of mine whose committee, to put him at ease, opened his exami-

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nation by asking him simply to describe his thesis, and he couldn't remember what it was about). I stumbled through a few patently absurd statements and folded. The ordeal was over. Later the Maestro said to me, "It was nothing, Don. Anyone could get nervous and forget something like that. You did splendidly, gave a fine account of yourself." Sure. At any rate, he was absolutely delighted, and I got my degree.

But there was more to our relationship than his serving as my chief guide in graduate studies. As the years passed, I realized that the Maestro regarded me not just as the favorite student but as the son he never had. I already had a fine father so I never saw him in that role, but he certainly displayed all the characteristics of a doting parent, and in this he was much like my father.

For one thing, he was impressed, too much so, by my recent service as a young Marine lieutenant in the Pacific and was deeply moved by the fact that I had shed blood (my own as well as the enemy's) in defense of the country. He worried greatly about my health, especially my war wounds (which have plagued me ever since), and was excessively solicitous when I was hospitalized for a month with a just-diagnosed case of amoebic dysentery I had acquired while lying wounded in a swamp during the Saipan campaign. Moreover, the Maestro, according to rumors that reached me via other graduate students, went the Marine Corps one better by upping my rank to captain and awarding me numerous decorations—an unrealistic display of pride that my own father successfully avoided (he just settled for getting me back alive).

Moreover, when I began to get bored, restless, and uneasy in Madison in early 1948, and even thought about leaving, he proposed a year's leave of absence abroad to work on my dissertation, which concerned the influence of America on Great Britain in the nineteenth century. Like a dutiful son, I packed up my wife and two small children and took off for Paris that summer where we lived while I commuted back and forth to London. The idea was the Maestro's, and a great one it was—we had an extraordinary year and the book that ultimately came out of that year I dedicated to him—but my father gets the credit for making *it* possible financially.

In his self-assumed role as father, the Maestro was obviously not averse to offering advice, and offer he did. In London I got pages of it about how to conduct my research, all of which, as it turned out, I ignored. For decades, too, he was always suggesting books I should read, and for years after I was settled in Northern California, he would intimate there might well be better positions more suitable to my talents, and he would suggest my name to various friends of his at better-known schools, telling them what a remarkable fellow I was. Happily, nothing came of these efforts, though I did get a couple of very cautious inquiries. To the great relief of those inquiring, I replied that the Maestro had it all wrong, I was content where I was. He sought to promote what little writing I managed to accomplish, and when I sent him a copy of an essay I had written on the nature of American influence abroad, he promptly sent it off on his own to a distinguished quarterly whose editor he knew, and to my surprise it was published. Like most fathers, the Maestro also saw me as following in his footsteps and becoming a productive scholar, turning out books and articles by the gross. My own father had the same idea, hoping for a time that I would become, like him, a pharmacist. Both were to be disappointed.

If the Maestro regarded me in a sense as a son, it was only natural that he look upon my wife as a daughter-in-law. He was, in fact, much taken with my wife as well as our children, toward whom he assumed a jovial grandfatherly pose. As far as I know, I was the only graduate student in history, and perhaps in the university, to own a home, and so we entertained frequently. The Maestro and his wife, Margaret, were our guests for dinner on various occasions, and they sometimes reciprocated.

Social contact with the Maestro after graduate school was very limited, though he visited us in Chico, California, on two occasions. The first was in the late fifties, when he arrived for a three-day visit on his way to somewhere else. Eager to show off the great man, my wife and I set up an elaborate cocktail party and invited colleagues from practically every department in the college. The Maestro moved easily from one to the other, discussing the latest literature in rural sociology with our sociologist whose specialty that was, flitting from Isadora Duncan to Balanchine with our instructor in

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the dance, marking down the achievements of the New Criticism with our American Lit. expert, contrasting Keynes with Marshall for the benefit of our economist, debating the batting order of the 1926 Yankees with a political scientist who had once played semi-pro ball, comparing the London performance of Helen Hayes and the New York performance of Laurette Taylor with our theater director, and so on down the line. As an added bonus for the wives of those present, he moved from the vicissitudes of foreign travel (highlighted by appropriate anecdotes) to the social significance of women's fashions, and on to the contrasting views of Watson and Spock on child rearing. In between he complimented my small children on the skill with which they made the martinis and the dispatch with which they served them. An astonishing performance, and made even more so by the fact that it gave the impression not of self-display but rather of his natural fascination with the interests and work of those with whom he was talking. That party was talked about in Chico for years afterwards, and some of the few survivors are still trying to find out the magic formula for the martinis. I give it now: ten parts Maestro, one part vermouth.

In later years, when he spent vacation time on the West Coast in Santa Barbara (where he had friends, naturally), I always took time to make the long drive down to have dinner with him. The Maestro was much impressed by this, and he delighted in asking his friends, "Do you have a friend who would drive a thousand miles (the Maestro always tended to round things out to the next highest number) to have dinner with you?"

While in his remarkable capacity for friendship the Maestro had great success in dealing with people, he came a cropper, as we used to say, in his dealings with the mechanical world of the twentieth century. Probably no one had as sure a command and understanding of the social and intellectual influence and implications of science and technology upon society and the lives of ordinary people, but that did not extend to a successful personal working relationship with modern technology. Automobiles were his bête noir. He was smashed into by them at much cost to bone and flesh; he lost them, misplaced them (graduate students were frequently assigned to keep an eye on where he parked them), had them stolen out from under him; their locks froze on him in the finest weather and their doors refused to open and when they did open, they not infrequently abruptly slammed shut on his hands; he invariably bought high and sold low.

Trains were equally inconsiderate. They jogged loose his sacroiliac, hid his briefcases under their benches, never got him to the church on time, so to speak, and left him in the lurch by deserted way stations in the dead of night on the Indian subcontinent with chance companions who promptly died in front of him without explanation.

An airline invariably and mysteriously altered its flight schedule the moment he boarded the plane; he took off in confidence for one country and landed in another; great electrical storms generally formed in the flight paths of all planes he was on; and, of course, his luggage always went to Bombay when he was headed for Istanbul.

The Maestro gave the lie to the dictum that the good die young. In fact, I always assumed he would live to be a hundred and forty—and this in the face of the innumerable fatal illnesses to which he was prone. The Maestro had more deadly diseases than the average physician sees in a lifetime of practice. As a consequence, he was one of the world's great medical and pharmaceutical authorities, whether walking, limping, or lying flat on his back. In his day he consumed enough medical drugs—pills, tablets, drops, ointments, sprays, injections, liquids and solids, colored, plain, and striped—to stock a small Midwestern wholesale drug house. His total pharmaceutical, medical, and hospital bills over the years probably surpassed the Bolivian national debt. But even here, until the end, the odds always seemed to be in his favor. Disease was his Mother Earth, and, like Antaeus, he rose each time refreshed and apparently stronger than before.

One of the delightful things about the Maestro was the way in which he was able to absorb all these untoward encounters with fate. He could tell these insane adventure stories about himself—all marked by flubs, mishaps, and missed cues—with the natural unembarrassed mirth of a small boy who has just seen his father take a pratfall on a banana peel. He was never self-conscious about all this, and you might have thought he was talking about

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someone else or describing a scene he had witnessed on the silver screen in May of 1929.

For a man devoted to the pursuit of reason and order in human affairs and discourse, the Maestro had a gift for evoking the irrational and the non sequiturial. Once in 1950, on a trip that took a small group of us through Illinois, the Maestro launched into a long monologue (one of his more favored forms of communication, I might note) on Lincoln country. Every small town we drove through became the scene of one of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. Stopping in one of these towns for dinner in early evening, we all went into a small café fronting on the lovely square so typical of those communities founded by transplanted New Englanders. As the waitress approached to take our orders, the Maestro with a wave of his hand toward the square remarked, "I suppose that's where the Lincoln-Douglas debate took place." With a slight frown of puzzlement, the waitress hesitated for a moment and then rallied with, "I don't know, I just came on duty at six o'clock."

None of these memories about the Maestro even begin to suggest the prodigious restless energy that so shaped his life and work and gave rise to legendary accounts of his bouts with the typewriter and pen. Visiting him one summer in Madison, I was awakened at four in the morning by the distant clatter of his 1922 Underwood. Three and a half hours later he emerged for breakfast with some thirty letters he had written to correspondents across the country and around the globe. This procedure was standard for him, the outward flow of mail as predictable and almost as vast as the daily rising of the tide.

The Maestro could never be idle or stand at ease. Sleep was a necessary abomination, illness only a low hurdle. You must be at your appointed task day and night, in sickness and in health. Cotton Mather would have loved him. In the summer of 1950, at the time of an automobile accident outside Sturgis, Michigan (he went off the road into an inconveniently placed river), while he was driving east to his summer home in New Hampshire, he tolerated the hospital bed for only two days and then moved out and took a room in the small cottage of an elderly couple. His jaw was broken in three places (a serious disability for a major talker) and he was covered with bruises. A lesser mortal would have welcomed the opportunity for leisured rest and meditation. But to the utter bewilderment of his aged host and hostess, the Maestro was the man who came to dinner. The morning I arrived to drive him on to New Hampshire I found myself wading through a living room stacked with letters, cables, and telegrams that had arrived by the sackful from all over the country and abroad as friends and colleagues picked up from the newspapers the account of his accident. At the moment of my arrival he had taken over the dining room and was delicately ironing, page by page, the still-damp stacks of his research notes that had gotten waterlogged when his car hit the river. He had been up and at this task since before dawn. Naturally.

This restlessness and extraordinary drive carried over into his teaching. In the classroom the Maestro was neither dramatic nor routine. For years the lecture has been increasingly discredited under the oppressive weight of dispirited mumbling from ancient notes or flamboyant displays by professors who use the podium to feed their vanity. The Maestro, however, made the lecture a valid and useful tool of learning. The time and energy he devoted to his lectures were substantial. He continually reorganized his material, sought out the new, shifted the emphasis, introduced the latest scholarly finds, both facts and ideas. His lectures were models of organization and lucidity. Few scholars of his reputation equaled him in his respect for students in the classroom, to say nothing of the time and patience he devoted to them in his office and in enlightening strolls through the library.

While undergraduates had their intellectual horizons broadened by contact with the Maestro, I daresay his graduate students (he guided eighty-six of them through their dissertations to the doctoral degree) benefited the most from his insights, suggestions, and criticisms. I would never have had the wit or imagination to embark upon a study of American influence abroad without the Maestro's urging that I do so.

His intellectual, social, and cultural interests were broad and far-reaching and, aided by a phenomenal memory bank, his knowledge bordered on the encyclopedic, not only in history but in the social sciences, the humanities, and the arts. He managed somehow to envelop all fields of knowledge under the um-

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brella of history, an ability that stretched from his first published essay in 1922, stressing the contributions of literature to understanding history to his last work in 1980, *Human Nature in American Thought.*

I suppose the Maestro's energy and knowledge are best measured by his productive scholarship—some twenty scholarly books and at least fifty major essays on subjects ranging from the peace movement to philanthropy abroad to dime novels to world's fairs, all within the context of American history. This scholarship has already been judged—by his Pulitzer Prize, the numerous awards of learned societies, the presidencies of the major historical organizations, the recognition of the distinguished visiting lectureships, both here and abroad, and his many honorary degrees. The full appraisal of his work remains to be done and this is not the place for that judgment. But I hope that whoever does it will take into account the fact that the Maestro is a genuine original. For he was, it seems to me, a pioneer in the real sense of the word—which is perhaps singularly appropriate for the onetime student of Frederick Jackson Turner. A classic example here is his *The Making of an American Community: A Case Study of Democracy in a Frontier County,* which set a pattern in the new social history by using the innovative techniques of quantification and demographic analysis of census records, tax lists, and other data.

The major example, however, and the central point of his career, was his pioneering work in social and intellectual history, *The Growth of American Thought* (1943), still in print after sixty years, which he described as "a social history of American thought." He received the Pulitzer Prize for this monumental work that few have tried to duplicate and none with success. His own earlier work all pointed toward this book, and all his subsequent work was related to it. I am inclined to think that no other single piece of writing in American history, short of Turner's essay on the frontier, has stimulated more varied and extensive scholarship.

Someday someone should try to track down the number of articles, books, and dissertations born of a single sentence, paragraph, or passage in *The Growth of American Thought.* I have an idea that the list would be a lengthy one and would include some of the more significant scholarship of the last fifty years.

In all his work the Maestro was less influenced than are most scholars by the current policy, program, idea, or condition, and more by his instinctive sensitivity to what it means to be involved in the human experiment and the American version of it. His chief concern, I think, was more with the pains and pleasures of the ordinary and the obscure than with the power and grandeur of the mighty. It is, perhaps, significant that his own venture into biography was to rescue Elihu Burritt, the learned blacksmith, from obscurity. The Maestro's work, it seems to me, was greatly shaped and conditioned by a deep sense of humanity and a profound respect for the individual human being. And this is why, despite his occasional gloom about the present prospects of mankind, his study and writing reflected a conviction that, in the long run, the evil some men do is outweighed by the good most people are capable of in their daily lives. In his Brown and Haley Lectures of the late 1950s, in words that seem useful today, he made these observations:

> This may be the century of the common man, but that does not mean merely that the political and educational leaders of our country should constantly have in mind the welfare of all the people; it means that we are all common men and that we should look for ideas, criticisms, suggestions for leadership wherever there are people who have experience related to a problem. As there is a multiplicity of problems, there will be many leaders.
>
> If multiple leadership is really an end of democracy, we must work to promote it in all the ways we can think of—work especially to promote willing participation of everyone in the making of public decisions. Our society could satisfy much more fully than it now does deep-rooted desires for recognition and appreciation, desires present in every human being. Our economy and our civilization have succeeded in providing the highest standard of living in all history, and also the greatest cultural opportunities for everyone, but we have not succeeded in making everyone feel that he is someone, that he belongs, that he is wanted, that he has an important and useful contribution to make.

In his writing and teaching, the Maestro emphasized the greatness that resides in the common body of humanity, and the common stuff of humanity found in the truly great. This is

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why, I think, he was such a passionate defender of academic freedom, a promoter of social justice, and an active worker against racial and sex discrimination, even at a time when the movement for those civil rights still lay in the future.

Equally at ease in the presence of prime ministers and New Hampshire farmers, as comfortable on the boulevards of Paris as on the county roads of his native Nebraska, as well-read in Ned Buntline as in Karl Barth, Merle Curti was a true cosmopolitan in a manner beyond the capacity of jet-setter or diplomat. As knowledgeable in the arts as in the social sciences, as understanding of science as he was of literature, he came as close to possessing an all-embracing mind as is possible in the top-heavy specialization of the twentieth century.

As scholar and teacher he will live on for a very long time—in the books, scholarly articles, and essays he wrote and in the students he trained who went on to train others in a continual passing on of his legacy. But the Maestro as an individual human being, a dear and close friend, will not survive those of us who knew him personally—his sweetness of character and his gentleness of manner—and whose lives were somewhat better for his presence than would otherwise have been the case.

The Maestro was not what you would call prepossessing—he was about five feet eight and a wiry one hundred and forty pounds, maintained by his love of walking and hiking. With blue eyes and a voice close to baritone, he talked very rapidly but with precision and clear enunciation. A friend of mine, who was his graduate student when I was, said he thought of Curti as Middle European in appearance (his family actually came from Switzerland) and that he was "perky looking." I always thought there was a kind of leprechaun look about him. He smiled a lot, one of his attractive features. My wife claimed he had the sweet guileless smile of a small child.

Though he had great respect for the religious beliefs of others and was a member of the Unitarian Church in Madison (which, to his great amusement, I once dismissed as just a debating society), I doubt if he was much of a believer. I happened to be with him when news came of the death of the great historian Charles A. Beard. The Maestro said that Beard was a complete non-believer. Well, I said, if that is so, he might well find himself in for the surprise of his life when he ends up at the Pearly Gates being quizzed about his life. The Maestro raised his eyebrows and asked if I believed in an afterlife. I replied that since nobody knew for sure, I supposed it was a fifty-fifty chance. The Maestro gave me one of his famous smiles and said, "Those are pretty good odds, aren't they?" I gave him one of my who-knows shrugs. He was slightly stunned but not distressed when his youngest daughter, after raising two sons to maturity as a single mother, became a nun. But he loved and supported her in this decision, took pride in her achievements and donated his New Hampshire property to the order to which she belonged.

But if religion was not a major element in his life, death was an inevitable factor, living as long as he did. His first wife, Margaret, a distinguished psychologist, died in her sixties. He later married the widow of an old friend, and outlived her as well. His oldest daughter also died before him.

As the Maestro grew much older, the many friends of his generation checked out of the game, one by one, until he was the lone survivor. And then those of younger generations, including former students, began to cash in their chips as well. He called this steadily mounting loss the curse of old age.

Old age may have saddened him in this regard, but it did not dull his mind; nor did his final illness, when strokes began to take their physical toll in the last year of his life. His last letters, though marked by more typographical errors than usual, were much the same in content as they had always been.

A couple of years before he died, I wrote a little book I had always wanted to write about what it was like to grow up in a small town in South Dakota in the 1920s and 1930s and sent the chapters off to him as I wrote them. He was absolutely delighted with this and replied with such enthusiasm to every one that I ended up using some of his comments as a blurb for the book. I think his pleasure came in part from the fact that he, too, grew up in a small town in the neighbor state of Nebraska. About a month after his death, I had a letter from an older woman who was a resident of the same retirement home and had become a

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close friend of the Maestro. She told me that as he lay dying, he had asked her to read to him from the copy of the book I had sent to him on its publication, and that in fact she had been reading it to him when he died. I was deeply moved by this. I don't know whether it meant that he was thinking of me in his last days, or whether my account prompted him to think about his own boyhood. Either way I like to think that he went out with happy memories—the right way to go.

Well, so long, Maestro. We'll meet again someday—fifty-fifty chance anyway!

My Country, My Family

ANN STRUTHERS

I have never gone any place
without carrying my country with me,
baggage never checked through
but lugged from terminal to terminal,
this burden of what I am—
the worst kind of contraband—
never searched, never detected.
Once I lost it in Paris
where lovers can do anything,
where for a little while
I evaded my Prussian father,
my pillar-of-salt mother,
escaped Iowa's flat plains of interdiction,
and its glaring, suspicious sky.

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Foreign Policy and War Powers

The Presidency and the Framers

LEONARD W. LEVY

President Bill Clinton, like his recent predecessors, has claimed an authority to dispatch American troops anywhere in the world without congressional support or authorization. But Clinton and other proponents of inherent presidential powers in the field of foreign affairs lack the support of original intent that some of them invoke. In fact, the Framers of the Constitution intended the Senate to be the principal architect of foreign policy. Had original intent prevailed, we would speak of the imperial Senate, not the imperial Presidency.

The Framers simply did not intend the President to be an independent dominating force, let alone the domineering one, in the making of foreign policy. They meant, rather, that the President should be the Senate's agent and, in matters involving war powers, the agent of the Congress in carrying out congressional policies. The Framers meant, at the most, that the President should be a joint participant in the field of foreign affairs, but not an equal one. They intended Congress to control the making and conduct of war, the Senate to control foreign policy, and the President to control the ceremonial function of representing the nation in its foreign relations, personally or through diplomats.

At the Constitutional Convention, Charles Pinckney of South Carolina opposed delegating to the executive a power over "war and peace," which he wanted Congress to retain. Roger Sherman of Connecticut considered the executive "as nothing more than an institution for carrying the will of the Legislature into effect." To James Wilson of Pennsylvania "war & peace" were among the legislative powers. The only powers that Wilson considered as "strictly executive" were enforcing the laws made by the legislature and choosing officers not appointed by the legislature. Wilson agreed with Sherman that the executive was an agent of the legislature, which should control war and peace. John Rutledge of South Carolina also opposed vesting power in the executive over war and peace. Every speaker who addressed the issue shared that opinion, including James Madison, who declared that the executive powers by definition did not include war and peace. The Convention accepted Madison's proposal to vest in the executive the power of carrying out national laws and making appointments not vested in Congress. No one spoke for an executive with powers stronger than Madison had proposed.

Not even Alexander Hamilton favored an executive power to control foreign policy or decide on war. He urged that the Senate should have "the sole power of declaring war, the power of advising and approving all Treaties, [and] the power of approving or rejecting all appointments" excepting department heads. He envisioned no exalted role for the executive with respect to war and treaty powers. They were as much legislative as executive, according to Hamilton's scheme.

The Convention appointed a Committee of

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Detail to frame a constitution incorporating its decisions. It had decided that there should be a national executive to consist of a single person "with Power to carry into Execution the national Laws," to appoint officers "not otherwise provided for," and to veto legislative enactments. He was to be paid a fixed compensation and was subject to removal from office by impeachment and conviction. The Committee of Detail also had the benefit of a plan submitted by Charles Pinckney, which authorized the executive to "carry into execution the national laws." No one had yet used the phrase "executive power." Later exponents of an imperial Presidency would ascribe to that phrase an inherent authority comparable to the royal prerogative in matters of foreign policy and the making of war. However, the Constitutional Convention halfway through its deliberations probably was unanimous in the opinion that the executive power extended only to the enforcement of existing law—that is, the executive power was fundamentally ministerial in nature and nearly devoid of discretion and leadership.

The Committee of Detail attempted to differentiate legislative and executive powers. It never considered assigning to the executive any role in the making of war or of foreign policy. It concluded that the executive, "whose stile shall be 'The President of the United States of America,'" should have the powers recommended by the New Jersey Plan, a nationalistic small-states proposal that had been rejected in favor of the Virginia Plan. The Virginia Plan had recommended that the executive should have "authority to execute the laws" plus the undefined executive powers exercised by Congress under the Articles of Confederation. The New Jersey Plan had empowered the executive to execute federal acts, appoint lesser officers, "direct all military operations," and call out the power of the Union against states that recalcitrantly failed to obey federal laws.

The Committee of Detail also urged that the President should be authorized to address the Congress on the state of the Union and recommend measures for its consideration. He received no "executive power" in express terms but was commanded to execute faithfully the laws of the United States—which is what the Convention understood "executive power" to mean. He had appointive powers, and he could grant pardons, be commander-in-chief of the armed forces, receive ambassadors, and correspond with the state governors. He had no authority to determine on war or to make treaties or conduct foreign policy or even to appoint diplomats. The legislature received sole power "To make war; to raise armies; To Build and equip fleets" and even "To call forth the aid of the militia, in order to execute the laws of the Union, enforce treaties, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions." And the Senate received sole power "to make treaties, and to appoint Ambassadors, and Judges of the supreme Court."

When the Convention discussed the recommendation by the Committee of Detail that Congress shall have the power "to make war," Charles Pinckney advocated that the Senate alone should have that power. Pierce Butler, Pinckney's colleague from South Carolina, preferred to vest the power in the President. No one else in the Convention spoke for that proposal, then or later. Madison and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts moved that Congress shall have the power "to declare war" rather than "to make war." Several delegates expressed unease at the thought of allowing the executive to exercise a prerogative power, whether declaring or making war, but the Convention passed the motion.

The decision of the Convention to empower Congress to "declare" rather than to "make" war indicated no shift in the Convention's attitude toward the executive. After the Convention had adjourned, Roger Sherman of Connecticut continued to speak of the power of Congress to "make" war, as if no difference existed between "make" and "declare." The change in wording took nothing from the Congress and added nothing to the President. The Committee of Detail had already recommended that he be the commander-in-chief. Repelling attack and "conducting" a war, in the literal sense of "leading" or "guiding," were executive functions. The commander-in-chief clause imported no grandiose breadth of powers. The Framers made the President the commander-in-chief because he could act swiftly, maintain responsible civil authority over the military, and conduct a war first decided upon by Congress.

On August 23, the Convention considered the recommendation of the Committee of Detail that the Senate "shall have power to make

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treaties." Madison argued that because the Senate represented the states, the President should be an "agent" in making treaties, meaning a deputy who represents and acts for another. By recommending that the President should be the Senate's agent in making treaties, Madison recognized that treaty making involved executive functions exercised in subordination to the Senate.

After Madison's remark about involving the President in making treaties, Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania expressed doubts about involving the Senate at all; he would be satisfied with an amendment providing that only treaties ratified by law shall be binding. Morris wished to add the House of Representatives to the treaty-making process by requiring that the House ratify the Senate's action.

As August ended, the Convention agreed to the creation of a committee consisting of one member from each state to make recommendations on unfinished business. The committee made many major recommendations, including the electoral college for the choice of the President. Its recommendation on foreign affairs and war proved to be acceptable to the Convention:

> The President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall have power to make treaties; and he shall nominate and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate shall appoint ambassadors, and other public Ministers, Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other Officers of the U— S—, whose appointments are not otherwise herein provided for. But no Treaty shall be made without the consent of two thirds of the members present.

The committee also urged that Congress should have the power to issue letters of marque and reprisal, and the Convention voted unanimously for the proposal. The fact that the Convention located that power in Congress after vesting diplomatic powers in the President reveals the Convention's conviction that the President should have no role in the determination of war. Letters of marque and reprisal authorized private citizens to make war against foreign nationals to avenge injuries not redressed by their governments. The power to issue such letters derived from the power of making war. Thus, the involvement of the President in diplomacy in no way detracted from the legislative nature of the power to make or begin war.

Having the President participate in treaty making did not indicate a new understanding that the President should become the architect of foreign policy. Madison had suggested that "the President should be an agent in Treaties" as a way of checking the authority of the Senate. The inclusion of the President in the treaty power thrust him in a position of leadership. He could act independently but could not accomplish anything; neither could the Senate. It could advise and consent; but only the President could make a treaty, even if he required concurrence. "Make," however, might have signified merely that no treaty had been executed until signed by the President. And "advice and consent" was a formula intended to signify that the President was dependent on the Senate. Indeed, "advice and consent" had two meanings of long standing, both of which conveyed a limited force to the powers of the President. The first was legislative, the second councilmanic in nature.

As to the first, English history shows that from the late seventeenth century, no bill could become law unless it received the endorsement of both the Parliament and the crown. "By and with the consent" of Parliament became a way of designating the legislative process. Its use by the Convention connoted the legislative nature of treaty making in the minds of the Framers.

The second or councilmanic meaning of "advice and consent" applies to the President's appointment powers. The clause used in connection with appointments is not the same as the clause used in connection with treaties. The President makes treaties by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, but he "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint." As to appointments, then, the Constitution assigns an initiative to the President; not so as to treaties. In either case, however, the Constitution authorizes the Senate to advise and consent. The Senate does not share a deliberative and policy-making power with the President in the case of appointments as much as it exercises the advisory powers of a privy or executive council, as in Massachusetts and New York.

Advice and consent signified a two-stage

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process. "Advice" required the Senate's involvement in foreign-policy decisions and negotiations as to treaties, and the Senate's recommendation of a slate or a job description as to nominations. The Senate was not meant to be a pro forma instrumentality for endorsing decisions reached by the President alone. "Consent" indicated ratification. "Advice and consent" indicated a deliberative involvement ending with ratification in cases of agreement. In effect, the Framers made the treaty power and the appointment power concurrent powers shared by the two branches.

When the Convention considered the treaty-making power, it defeated a motion to involve the House of Representatives in giving advice and consent to the President. The treaty-making clause required a two-thirds assent of the Senate. Wilson favored a simple majority, and Rufus King observed that a majority might be sufficient because the President's involvement constituted enough of "a check" on the Senate. Madison, however, feared that the President's stake in a war might tempt him to impede a treaty of peace. Gouverneur Morris replied that the President's involvement in the treaty power was "harmless." Morris believed that the President's participation was valuable because the President "was the general Guardian of the National Interests." Hugh Williamson of North Carolina remarked that "Treaties are to be made in the branch of the people," meaning that the Senate would make treaties. Nathaniel Gorham of Massachusetts added, "The President's consent will also be necessary in the new Govt." That was the last remark about the President and the treaty power.

Nothing said indicated that anyone thought that the President would have an important independent role in treaty making. The Convention adopted the two-thirds requirement and appointed a Committee of Style to put the Constitution in final shape. That committee placed in Article II, which deals with the executive power, the paragraph on the power of the President to make treaties and appointments with the advice and consent of the Senate. No one commented on the fact that treaty power had been shifted from the article on the Senate to the one on the President. No one thought that the new placement of the treaty power suggested an enhancement of presidential power.

The placement of the two clauses bearing the formula "by and with the advice and consent of the Senate" had no substantive significance. Leaders of the Constitutional Convention established the presidency as an independent branch but did not mean that the chief executive was in business by himself or that he could take significant action in foreign affairs without having the concurrence of the Senate; they expected the Senate to dominate the making of foreign policy as much as Congress controlled the making of war.

What supporters of the Constitution meant in this matter received definition by the authors of *The Federalist.* Number 64 by John Jay, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Congress, revealed an expectation that the Senate would make foreign policy but that the President would be best suited to conduct that policy and negotiate treaties. Jay believed that the Senate shaped policy and the President carried it out.

In *The Federalist* Number 69, Hamilton analyzed the powers of the President in comparison to those of the royal prerogative. Anti-Federalists had trumpeted the charge that the President was no better than an elected monarch whose abuse of his powers would imperil liberty. Disagreeing, Hamilton compared the prerogative of the British executive office with the President's limited powers. The President merely directed the armed forces, while the King's power "extends to the declaring of war and to the raising and regulating of fleets and armies; all of which by the Constitution under consideration would appertain to the Legislature." The President exercised the treaty power with advice and consent of the Senate, while the king was the sole representative of his nation "in foreign transactions" and of his own accord could make all treaties and alliances. The crown appointed ambassadors, while the President shared that power with the Senate. Hamilton contrasted the crown's "sole power" with the Constitution's "concurrent power."

In *The Federalist* Number 75, where Hamilton discussed the treaty power, he emphasized the peculiar "intermixture of powers" that resulted from "the union of the executive with the senate." The treaty power did not belong to the executive, Hamilton declared, "For if we attend carefully to its operation, it will be found to partake more of the legislative than

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of the executive character, though it does not seem strictly to fall within the definition of either of them." That seems to indicate that Hamilton believed that the Senate would propose foreign policy; the President would execute it. In the management of foreign negotiations, he wrote, the President was "the most fit agent," while the importance of foreign policy and the "operation of treaties as laws, plead strongly for the participation of the whole or a part of the legislative body in the office of making them." Hamilton ended by referring to a "joint possession" of the treaty power, but he expected that the Senate would make foreign policy. He also expected that the President would be the Senate's agent in carrying out that policy in the course of negotiations with foreign nations.

The proponents of ratification widely shared the opinions of Hamilton and Jay. A few Framers preferred a major role for the President and a minor one for the Senate in exercising national diplomacy. Only one delegate at the Convention, Butler of South Carolina, proposed that the President should possess the treaty power exclusively. Otherwise, no delegate preferred a more important role for the President in foreign affairs than for the Senate.

Anti-Federalists had nothing critical to say about the Constitution's provisions on diplomacy, wars, and treaties. Anti-Federalists had very little of substance to say about foreign policy or war powers, and what they said was similar to Federalist opinion. The Anti-Federalists and the Federalists shared a consensus in that regard. If the Anti-Federalists believed that the Framers had intended the President to dominate foreign policy, that intention would have become a major emphasis of Anti-Federalist attack. Of the seventy-seven recommendations for amendments proposed by the various state ratifying conventions, only one, recommending a two-thirds majority, dealt with the power of Congress to declare war. About as little evidence of dissatisfaction turns up respecting the treaty power.

The consensus of 1787–1789 as to war powers and foreign policy operated effectively for a remarkably long time. It disintegrated briefly in 1793 when Hamilton championed the power of the President to declare neutrality without consulting, let alone advising with and obtaining the consent of, the Senate. Hamilton was the first to make a sustained argument that the President had plenary authority in the field of foreign affairs and by virtue of an inherent executive power could do whatever he wished to do so long as the Constitution did not clearly limit him. Madison countered that the Constitution had rejected the British theory of executive prerogative, and he quoted *The Federalist* against Hamilton. Although Hamilton's position was destined for acceptance by Presidents in the twentieth century, it was not accepted in its time or at any time before Lincoln's aggressive exercise of powers.

Words and actions of the founding generation have been drawn upon to support the imperial Presidency in foreign affairs and presidential use of armed force in the absence of a declaration of war; but those words and actions have been wrenched out of context and twisted in meaning. In 1790, for example, Jefferson, as secretary of state, asserted, "The transaction of business with foreign nations is Executive altogether. . . . Exceptions are to be construed strictly." Jefferson was merely discussing the power to send and receive ambassadors, not the power to make foreign policy. Similarly, John Marshall's 1800 declaration, "The President is sole organ of the nation in its external relations, and its sole representative with foreign nations," meant nothing more than that only the President communicates with foreign nations. In 1936 the Supreme Court misused the Jefferson and Marshall statements to support a historically fallacious opinion that the President possesses inherent powers to make foreign policy. Hamilton himself in 1798 agreed that the quasi-war with France did not trigger inherent presidential powers to authorize reprisals for attacks, but he could repel attacks without congressional approval—a statement in keeping with the original intent at Philadelphia.

That intent was reflected in *Talbot v. Seeman* (1801), one of the Chief Justice Marshall's earliest decisions. He declared, "The whole powers of war being by the Constitution of the United States vested in Congress, the acts of that body alone be resorted to as our guide in the enquiry." That accurately summed up the matter.

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The Defoe That Never Was

A Tale of De-Attribution

P. N. FURBANK and W. R. OWENS

In art history, de-attribution can be front-page news. (One only has to think of the Rembrandt Project or the purging of the Vermeer canon.) It is otherwise in literature. Here, only attribution really makes the headlines, and many are the column inches granted to the attribution of a new poem (even maybe a terrible new poem) to William Shakespeare. De-attribution, on the other hand, tends to be pictured as a slow and invisible matter, akin to natural selection.

This picture or theory, indeed, probably works well enough with the bulk of literature. But there is a kind of author with whom it falls down completely. We mean such an author as Daniel Defoe, who published mainly anonymously, was enormously prolific, and many of whose writings were never reprinted and exist only in a few scattered copies in major libraries. To form an adequate idea of the canon of such an author, the common reader, and even the scholar, is going to have to depend on somebody's bibliography; and bibliographies are mysterious, not to say all-too-human, things, reflecting their compilers' penchants and obsessions, and—what is even more to the point—being most commonly based on *other* bibliographies.

For there is a law more fundamental than any other regarding authorial canons. We may call it the law of inertia, and it is to the effect that it is infinitely easier to get a work into an author's canon than to get it out again. It is characteristic of bibliographies (that apparently so inhuman and impersonal genre) that they assign works to an author with magisterial laconism. This means that, when another bibliographer wishes to improve and correct his predecessor's list, he may be in the dark (almost as much so as the uninstructed reader) as to how a work got into the list in the first place. Thus, if he has no positive reason for questioning the attribution, and because life is short, he will be tempted to give it the benefit of the doubt, presuming that his predecessor knew of some good reason for making it. Then, when a third bibliographer comes along, the attribution will appear to have already *two* supporters. . . . The process, as may be seen, is cumulative.

We have mentioned Defoe, and of no English author is it more true that his oeuvre or canon is the construction of bibliographers. Simple statistics make this plain. He died in 1731, and in the first substantial list of his writings—that by George Chalmers, published in 1790—he was credited with a little more than a hundred works. Two centuries later, in the second edition of John Robert Moore's *Checklist of the Writings of Daniel Defoe* (1971)—which has for some time now been the standard authority—the total has swollen to 570! It is a dizzying edifice of attribution, for which we have, essentially, to thank six men: George Chalmers (1742–1825), Walter Wilson (1781–1847), William Lee (1812–c. 1890), James Crossley (1800–1883), W. P. Trent (1862–1939), and J. R. Moore (1890–1973).

Some ten years ago we became fascinated by this phenomenon of the burgeoning Defoe canon. It made us want to find out more about those six bibliographers and the way

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they had gone to work. We also wanted to study the method of transmission between them—especially since, as we soon discovered, they nursed considerable contempt for one another's methods. It has been an absorbing pursuit, full of human as well as other kinds of interest. But it has led us to an alarming, or at any rate awkward, opinion: that is, that almost half of the items in Moore's *Checklist* may have no business being there at all.

We must not be misunderstood here. Our grounds for casting doubt on these attributions are by no means all of the same kind. Some of the items in Moore's list have, since his day, been convincingly ascribed to another author. In the case of others, there seems to be good evidence, whether external or internal, to suggest they could not be, or are most unlikely to be, by Defoe. But the largest class is of works that, on stylistic or other grounds, could plausibly be thought to be by Defoe, were there anything, any tiny scrap of external evidence, to connect them with him. But since, so far as we know, there is not, we take the view that they ought not to be assigned to him—and above all not given unquestioned status as his. The fact that a work seems as if it might well be by a given author is, in itself, no reason at all for actually assigning it to him or her. Also, to assign a work to an author a century, or two centuries, after his death, and on internal evidence alone—which is the case with the majority of these attributions—seems a rash enterprise anyway.

We have come to the view that Defoe is a rather special case in English literature and that a bibliography of him needs to contain two categories: definite and certain attributions and merely probable ones. If a work is to qualify for the former category, there must be some piece of external evidence connecting it with Defoe (as well, of course, as convincing internal evidence). For the latter category, on the other hand, it may be sufficient if there is really strong internal evidence—with the all-important proviso, however, that the epithet "probable" should mean precisely what it says and not be a mere synonym for "possibly by Defoe" or "often attributed to Defoe."

But it may be asked, does it greatly matter if a merely plausible attribution is made—made, as it were provisionally, till the question of its authorship can be decided more firmly? Well yes, we think it does. For let us imagine that the work in question is in a genre, or on a topic, not normally associated with Defoe. Its presence in his bibliography will infallibly tempt someone to argue that, if he wrote *that* work, he was very likely the author of some other work, or works, in the same genre or on the same topic. Thus before long, insensibly, the world will have acquired a new Defoe (as it might be, a Defoe highly knowledgeable about Swedish affairs, or a crime-reporting Defoe); and then the next thing will be that, because of this, his biography will require rewriting. (It should be noted that all the great architects of the Defoe canon, with the exception of James Crossley, also wrote biographies of him.) The danger, of course, is that one will end up with a Defoe of whom it is impossible to make sense—and this, it seems to us, is exactly what has happened.

In the early 1980s, having together become interested in Defoe, we began reading our way through some of his lesser-known writings, and we became puzzled by a pamphlet, reputedly by him, entitled *A Vindication of the Press.* The author of this rather platitudinous tract, published in 1718, describes himself as a young author, a devout Churchman, and an enthusiast for the theater—all of which Defoe, a Dissenter in his late fifties with a lifetime prejudice against the stage, was not. This, we told ourselves, must no doubt be one of the disguises of which—as one was so often told—the protean Defoe was fond. Still, just out of curiosity, we thought we would find out how and when the attribution to Defoe was first made and reassure ourselves that it was quite solid.

It turned out that the pamphlet was listed—for the first time, apparently—by the American bibliographer W. P. Trent in his Defoe chapter in the *Cambridge History of English Literature* (1912), subsequently reappearing in the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (1940), in J. R. Moore's *Checklist* (1971), and in the *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (1971). A facsimile edition of it had been brought out in 1951 by the Augustan Reprint Society, edited by Otho Clinton Williams. But, so far as we could discover, no bibliographer had ever explained in print why the work was thought to be by Defoe—which, considering that the ascription was so very belated, two hundred years having passed since

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the work was written, one might surely have expected.

So we studied one or two more slightly questionable-looking pamphlets, to find out which of Defoe's bibliographers had been the first to assign it to him, and to try to establish what grounds (if any) they had offered for doing so. This in turn aroused our interest in these bibliographers themselves. They turned out to be colorful men, remarkably different in what they were looking for in Defoe, and highly idiosyncratic in their methods. But just how idiosyncratic it took some time to find out.

That it should have been George Chalmers who produced the first full-length bibliography of Defoe was perhaps unfortunate in a way. He was an immensely energetic antiquary, of aggressively Tory views together with something of a prejudice against Dissenters, and with a fatal tendency to involve himself in identity disputes and questions of forgery—always on the wrong side. (He wrote not one but two six-hundred-page books to defend the authenticity of the Shakespeare manuscripts "newly-discovered" by Samuel Ireland.) His principles in attribution were, in fact, weird. He held that "every presumption is evidence till the contrary is made apparent" and that positive evidence has intrinsic superiority over negative. When, in 1785, as an amusement during a convalescence, he wrote a *Life of Defoe*, the only novel by Defoe that he mentioned was *Robinson Crusoe*, and it required a correspondent in *The Gentleman's Magazine* to point out that Defoe was also the author of *Moll Flanders*, *Roxana*, *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, and *A New Voyage Round the World*. The shaky logic that seems to have guided him in ascribing works to Defoe is suggested by the following remark of his: "It may be observed that in Defoe's works he generally throws some part into Dialogue. By attending to this Circumstance and others I think the Knowledge of many of his pieces may be obtained." The world is considerably in Chalmers's debt for doing what he did on Defoe's behalf, but his work can hardly be said to inspire confidence.

Then there was Walter Wilson, the friend of Charles Lamb and author of a voluminous *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel De Foe*, published in 1830. Here, certainly, was a man well suited to explore one aspect at least of Defoe's life, the ruling interest in Wilson's life being Nonconformity and the civil disabilities suffered by Nonconformists. One reviewer of his book said, with some reason, that it ought really to have been called the "Times and Life" of Defoe. Nevertheless, if one can learn the trick of reading his vast and prosily rambling volumes, they are amazingly informative.

What concerns us more here, however, is the "Catalogue of Defoe's Works" that he appended to his first volume. This was (at 210 items) nearly twice as long as George Chalmers's; but what soon becomes apparent, when one reads this in the light of the biography, is that Wilson's attitude toward attribution was extraordinarily relaxed. "If not penned by Defoe," he will say of some pamphlet, "it was the production of a kindred writer"; or, "This seems to have been written by an English man, and perhaps by Defoe." Given his particular approach to his subject, this indeed is reasonable enough. Or it would be but for one (from our point of view all-important) matter: that when it comes to his "Catalogue of Defoe's Works" these pamphlets, so loosely and vaguely attached by him to Defoe, will be firmly listed as Defoe's. In fact, if you compare one particular item in his list with what he says about it in the text of his biography, you will read that, though the work was attributed to Defoe at the time, "there seem no valid reasons" for ascribing it to him. It is easy enough to imagine the rich scope for misunderstanding offered to later bibliographers by Wilson's "Catalogue."

His successor, William Lee, had two motives for undertaking a biography and bibliography of Defoe, and one of them was a great antipathy to Wilson. Lee considered that Wilson took a quite false view of Defoe, depicting him as a rancorous radical, whereas he had in fact been a "liberal Conservative" in politics and—though personally a Dissenter—a staunch supporter of the Church of England. By training a civil engineer, Lee had spent the earlier part of his career under the great sanitary reformer Edwin Chadwick, and the disgracing and dismissal of Chadwick in 1854 rankled with him as a monstrous injustice toward a great man. He was, as this implies, inclined to hero-worship, and it is plain that Defoe became, for him, another hero—a further example of a man of goodwill and high-mindedness exposed to vilification and misunderstanding. It so happened that in 1864 six remarkable letters by Defoe, addressed to the

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undersecretary of state during 1718, had come to light, and apparently showed that he had taken money from the Whigs to masquerade as a Tory and insinuate himself into the management of certain Tory journals, so as to take the sting out of their anti-government attacks. Reviewers, when these letters were published, accused Defoe of "baseness" and "rascality," and this launched Lee on a Herculean reading program of eighteenth-century journals to assess whether Defoe's activities really deserved these epithets. His conclusion was a confident verdict of "Not guilty," and the mass of material he had assembled shaped itself into a three-volume *Daniel Defoe: His Life, and Recently Discovered Writings*, published in 1869. The first volume was a biography, preceded by a "Chronological Catalogue of Daniel Defoe's Works," and the remaining two volumes consisted of anonymous periodical articles, amounting to some three hundred thousand words in all, which Lee, who was by now very confident of his ability to recognize Defoe's prose style, had identified as coming from Defoe's pen.

In his "Catalogue" Lee rejected thirty items from Wilson's list and added sixty-four new attributions of his own. To understand his methods in attribution, however, it is essential to remember that he was also writing a biography. He made certain important assumptions about Defoe, in particular that, having become disgusted by his association with the high-Tory and Jacobite periodical *Mist's Journal* (for it was true that Defoe had joined the management of this journal, though for the best of motives), he had transferred his services to a much more reputable organ, *Applebee's Journal*, acting as its lead writer for some six years. Lee also assumed that, criminal narratives and dying confessions being Applebee's speciality, Defoe had become Applebee's official crime reporter, interviewing criminals in Newgate on his behalf and writing biographies of thieves and highwaymen for Applebee to publish. Lee's imagination even led him to believe that, having written a *Narrative of All the Robberies, Escapes etc. of John Sheppard*, the elderly Defoe, in the guise of "Mr. Applebee," had appeared at Tyburn and mounted the executioner's cart, for Sheppard to hand him, ceremonially, a copy of this confessional pamphlet.

As a result of this assumption or set of assumptions, Lee attributed several criminal pamphlets to Defoe (in one or two cases, he seems never even to have seen a copy), and in addition innumerable leaders and news items from *Applebee's Journal* (these forming the larger proportion of the "newly-discovered writings"). This whole biographical and bibliographical edifice rested on one thing alone: Lee's faith that, from certain habits of style and "favourite phrases" he could infallibly recognize Defoe's hand. For, so far as we know, there is no external evidence whatever for Defoe having been associated with Applebee; various reasons can be suggested, moreover, why it is rather improbable.

Two truths came home to us as we got a clearer idea of Lee. First, that it mattered enormously that he was the sort of man he was, one who felt a deep urge always to think the best of Defoe—the best according to his own appealing but rather simpleminded standards. This meant that he was unwilling to admit that Defoe could ever have lied, whereas anyone but Lee is forced to conclude that he could be a most amazing liar. (People have tended to infer from this that he had no fixed principles, which does not follow at all.)

Second, as it appeared to us, the bibliographer and biographer in Lee had been in an unconscious but disastrous collusion. All the latter part of Lee's biography calls for thorough dismantling; but because dismantling his biography would also mean dismantling his bibliography, the two being inextricably intertwined, no one has so far made the attempt. We do not mean that his biography is still regarded as gospel; but it has not, as it needs to be, been questioned in toto.

We turn next to the Manchester bibliophile and bibliographer James Crossley. Crossley possessed the most comprehensive collection of Defoe's works in the kingdom (in some respects more complete than the British Museum's), and he published six new attributions to Defoe in *Notes and Queries* and *The Gentleman's Magazine*. He was held in some awe by other bibliophiles, Lee included; also, as all that we found about him suggested, he was a somewhat vain and devious man. He at least seemed to have played an unkind trick on William Lee. Lee had been in touch with him while writing his book, but it came as a total and painful surprise to him when Crossley, in reviewing his *Daniel Defoe*, claimed

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to be in possession of "at least fifty more distinct works hitherto unattributed to Defoe, but which may confidently be ascribed to him." This was evidently a long-prepared coup de théâtre, calculated to put Lee down. Crossley did not name the works, but at some point he drew up a manuscript list of them (in fact, to the number of sixty), and this list, as we were to discover, would eventually have a large influence on the Defoe canon.

Our picture of these bibliographers was building up nicely. George Chalmers left a mass of papers; a fair amount is known about Walter Wilson; and we had the good fortune to come upon a large cache of letters from and to John Robert Moore as well as a mass of his working notes. There appeared, though, to be a missing link. In various reference books we read that the American scholar W. P. Trent, who had supplied a new and greatly expanded listing of Defoe's writings in the *Cambridge History of English Literature* in 1912, had gone on to compile a large-scale catalogue raisonné of these writings. However, this had never been published, and the reference books did not make it clear where it was to be found or whether it had in fact survived. Eventually, after much baffled searching, we tracked it down in the Beinecke Library. What we found was the manuscript of a descriptive catalogue of Defoe's works, running to more than three thousand pages; also a version of this made by a professional typist; together with the manuscript and typed copy of an extensive new biography of Defoe, and innumerable handwritten notes, drafts, and autobiographical jottings. It was an extraordinary horde of material, revealing a touching, indeed rather tragic, story.

Trent had attempted what no other bibliographer had done. He not only had formed his own idea of the Defoe canon, adding to it 152 items not in Lee, but had supplied lengthy discussions of each item—sometimes running to as many as twenty pages—giving the evidence for the attribution, such as there was; tracing the publishing history of the work, as revealed in his own magnificent Defoe collection (later sold to the Boston Public Library); and explaining his reasons for ascribing the work to Defoe. When, in 1927, he finally abandoned work on it, he had handed the manuscript over to an ex-pupil of his, H. C. Hutchins, who had had it typed. Since then the vast work had remained, uncatalogued and for the most part unseen, in the basement of the Beinecke.

Studying this work of Trent's seemed to give us insights into many things: the rights and wrongs of making first-time attributions to an author nearly two centuries after his death; the perils of basing ascriptions upon verbal "tests" (Trent went even further along this line than William Lee); the sense in which decisions in literary attribution can be an expression of character; and the great occupational dangers for an attributer in working alone. One might add, what is perhaps most important of all for our present purposes, an insight into the misunderstandings and unregarded processes that help authorial canons to grow.

There is an unpublished biography of Trent by F. T. Walker (1943), from which we learned a good deal. Trent was a professor at Columbia University, originally from Richmond, Virginia, and before making Defoe his specialty he had been well known as a historian of the South (he had also founded and edited the *Sewanee Review*). He was a combative man and a fervent idealist, who would tell his students that "the only things that mattered in this world were babies and great style." His pupil Carl van Doren called him "the noblest man I ever knew." It was thus a matter of some consequence that, having initially thought of Defoe as an honorable and maligned man, a year or two's work on him led Trent to believe him an absolute rascal, capable of any duplicity. This did not deter him from his research, or from making himself the leading authority on Defoe; nevertheless it was a perilous frame of mind for someone engaged in literary attribution. It was probably more dangerous than William Lee's simple faith in Defoe's probity, for it meant that behind any anonymous pamphlet claiming to be by, shall we say, "An Old Officer" or "An Honest Tory" or "A Clergyman of the Church of England," Trent would be liable to detect the presence of that supposed disguise expert Daniel Defoe.

The first result of his labors was a series of three articles in the New York *Nation* in 1907. It set out a variety of new ascriptions, either positive or tentative, and at the heart of it were the Crossley attributions. The manuscript list had been passed on to Trent by the eighteenth-century scholar George Aitken,

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and—partly no doubt because of its oracular nature, for he gave no reasons for his ascriptions—it had given him an awed respect for Crossley's judgment. He wrote in the *Nation* that at least twenty-eight of Crossley's attributions should be "accepted as readily as almost any entry in Lee's list," and that fifteen more were "so marked by Defoe's characteristics that doubt with regard to them almost partakes of over-scrupulousness."

In 1910 Trent was invited to write the Defoe chapter in the *Cambridge History of English Literature.* This, with its concluding list of Defoe's writings—which brought the total of works up to 364—represented the peak of Trent's public achievement. He was already on a downward slope, assailed by doubts about whether his great catalogue would ever find a publisher and, in the eyes of his friends, becoming altogether too obsessed by the baffling problems of Defoe bibliography. The 1914–18 war also brought him into trouble of another kind. He held, and announced in print, that America should at all costs try to keep out of the war, but that if she were forced to become involved, it would, naturally, have to be on the German side. This greatly outraged his colleagues at Columbia and led to his resigning from all his clubs and coming near to giving up his professorship. Thus when, after the war, he returned to his Defoe studies, it was in a self-doubting mood. He would re-read pamphlets he had studied fifteen years before, anxiously comparing his reactions now with what they had been then. His wife died; he suffered one or two minor breakdowns; and eventually in Paris in the summer of 1927, after delivering a flaming public speech about the Sacco and Vanzetti affair, he suffered a stroke that left him incapacitated for the remaining twelve years of his life.

What Trent had done in his unpublished bibliography was, in one sense at least, exactly what had so long been needed. He had not only mastered Defoe's immense oeuvre, and corrected and filled out the work of all his previous bibliographers in all sorts of ways, making a number of important discoveries; he had also, when it came to attribution, broken the silence of bibliography and set out the whole method of his reasoning.

However, the weaknesses in his work were many, too. Sometimes, the business of applying his system of verbal "tests" to a pamphlet would distract him from reading the pamphlet itself properly and lead him to miss its true (perhaps subtle) drift. Again, the "Defoe in disguise" theory gave him an all too fatally easy escape route. As an example of his method at its worst, we may quote what he said about a tract called *An Apology for the Army* (1715), written in the person of an "Officer." If, writes Trent, it was not the work of a real officer, "I naturally find its author in that contemporary pamphleteer most likely to disguise himself." On such a basis, evidently, practically any anonymous eighteenth-century pamphlet could be fathered by Defoe.

There is a great deal to be said about Trent's unpublished work; but what interested us as much as anything was our gradual realization that—in an unnoticed way, and partly through a misunderstanding—this work, after all, managed to exercise great influence. For the next major listing of the Defoe canon was by Trent's pupil H. C. Hutchins, in the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (1940). For this, Hutchins, who was now in possession of Trent's manuscript and was himself not a very adventurous scholar, leaned heavily on Trent's unpublished researches and included certain new attributions made by Trent after the time of his *Cambridge History* list of 1912.

This brings us to the last of our cast of characters, John Robert Moore. His career raises the question of authority especially vividly, in that it was the great aim of his life to become the unchallenged authority on Defoe. Early in his career Moore spent some years elaborating the theory that *A General History of the Pyrates* (1724), a famous and important collection of biographies of pirates, ascribed on its title page to "Charles Johnson," was really by Defoe. His case was based entirely on internal evidence and on supposed parallels with Defoe's known works, and in our eyes it is thoroughly unconvincing. The words and phrases he claimed to be especially characteristic of Defoe—like *de facto,* or *in fine*—are utterly commonplace and such as any writer might have used. Nevertheless, when he published his theory in *Defoe in the Pillory and Other Studies* in 1939, it was received very respectfully, and this set the course for the rest of his career.

From now on Moore attributed very boldly, feeling it unnecessary to offer much in the way of reasons. He had a way of advancing attribu-

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tions as if they were unchallengeable fact and as if it hardly concerned the reader how they had been arrived at. Moreover, some years before the first edition of his *Checklist of the Writings of Daniel Defoe* came out, he supplied various major libraries, including the British Museum, with lists of his new ascriptions. Thus when his book appeared, these new ascriptions were already enshrined in library catalogues, appearing to give independent corroboration of his findings. (Since he frequently changed his mind, these library catalogues were to be, and sometimes still are, haunted by attributions that he later went back on.) It was with the same assertion of unquestionable authority that, in his *Checklist*, he did not, for the most part, even indicate which of the items in it were new attributions. This had the effect, whether intentional or not, of making his book more or less impossible to review; and indeed its reviewers, though they were laudatory, prudently restricted themselves to generalities.

Moore was all along aware that W. P. Trent had gone on with his researches after 1912, but he formed the impression that they had not amounted to much, and indeed he came to have an altogether low opinion of Trent's methods. When it became known that Trent had produced a huge unpublished bibliography, he made no effort to see it. This is a good example of the kind of misunderstanding, or rupture in transmission, that often takes place in literary attribution. For it means that Moore never fully realized the degree to which Trent had anticipated his own work; nor that, in adopting many of H. C. Hutchins's new attributions in the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, he was in fact unknowingly drawing on Trent's researches. Had he seen Trent's bibliography, he would have realized what lay behind many of Trent's new attributions in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, for Trent—it is the great virtue of his method—would have made this clear. As it was, he seems often to have assumed, quite wrongly, that Trent was basing himself on external evidence. As Moore wrote in his *Checklist*, "Unless I could offer valid objections against an earlier attribution, I accepted it (at least temporarily) on the assumption that my predecessor might have known of evidence which I had not seen."

In 1952 Moore wrote proudly to a friend that in his work on Defoe he had made "the largest single addition to the canon of any writer in English history." One can well believe him. For by the end of his career he had enlarged the Defoe canon by some 140 items, bringing the grand total of items up to 570. In all fairness, it has to be said that as the result of this fury of attribution he made some valuable discoveries. On the other hand, the Defoe whom he presented to the world was the weirdest mass of contradictions imaginable, a figure impossible to make human sense of.

The history of the Defoe canon, with all its misunderstandings, queer maneuvers, and confusions in transmission—not to mention the (in our eyes) madly unsystematic methods used by its creators—more and more took hold of our imagination. We published an article questioning the attribution of *A Vindication of the Press*, and this elicited a published reply by a leading Defoe scholar, Maximillian E. Novak. He was friendly and courteous but took the line that, though admittedly there were difficulties about this attribution, they could probably be easily explained away—for one thing, could the pamphlet not have had two authors? Also, more generally, he seemed to hold that the current canon carried authority, the cumulative authority of a succession of bibliographers, and that one would need to have very good reasons before challenging it. This of course only helped reinforce our prejudices; for the more we studied that cumulative authority, the stranger and more accident-prone it appeared. We reasoned that, though authority might have a rightful place in religion, and perhaps in some other spheres, it could hardly be said to do so in bibliography.

So we published more articles, questioning further attributions. In doing so, we always made a point of tracing the origin and the mode of transmission of the ascription. We tried to find out what had been said, in the past, about the general principles of literary attribution. (The proceedings of a symposium at Columbia University in 1958, "Evidence for Authorship," was a help here.) We studied the legal science of evidence. Further, we asked ourselves what could be learned from attribution in art history, and we discovered that William Lee, in attaching so much significance to Defoe's "favourite phrases," was asserting

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something very close to the "connoisseurship" theory in art history being promulgated at much the same time by Giovanni Morelli. Studying semi-conscious verbal habits was much like studying the painting of fingernails and ear lobes, as recommended by Morelli.

With help from this reading, we drew up our own set of principles of author attribution. One of them (it is also a principle in art history) stresses the extreme importance of avoiding "chain-forging"—that is, using a merely speculative or tentative attribution as a basis for a further attribution instead of returning to some secure center. Another is that external evidence must take logical priority over internal—not in the sense that internal evidence cannot be very weighty, but that normally one would not start considering internal evidence till some scrap at least of external evidence prompts one to do so. (If there is evidence that a murderer had red hair and a Cornish accent, this would be a sound reason for the police to interrogate a person with these characteristics, *if there were some other reason to connect him with the crime.*)

Could questions of attribution be solved by the methods of statistical mathematics and with the aid of a computer? This was another question (very much in the air at the time) that we decided to see if we could form views on, though neither of us was a mathematician. It was a grueling and eye-opening, but in the end rather entertaining, escapade (it is amazing how rarely stylometers manage to agree with other stylometers). In the course of it we produced computer-generated concordances of *Moll Flanders* and *Robinson Crusoe*, which Garland Press published for us; and in fact our fumbling inquiry led us, rightly or wrongly, to one or two definite conclusions. First, that, whereas "stylometry" (the application of statistical mathematics to literary attribution) might conceivably be helpful in deciding whether an anonymous work is more likely to be by author A than author B—that is to say, when applied in a situation where candidates for authorship are few and known—it cannot help in the case of "Author A against the world," which is the shape that Defoe attribution problems usually take. (Or to put it another way: it was illusory to suppose, as some stylometrists claim, that an author has a unique statistical "fingerprint," distinguishing him or her from all others.) Secondly, we came to the view that it was never legitimate for a literary scholar, not himself or herself a mathematician, to appeal to the findings of some tame mathematician as support for his or her attribution theory. (The temptation to get the answer you want from the mathematician is simply too compelling.) If you wish to apply statistical mathematics to attribution, we concluded, you must do it yourself.

One of John Robert Moore's greatest contributions to Defoe studies was to sponsor a microfilm, in thirty-two reels, of the text of all the works included in his *Checklist* of Defoe's writings. We persuaded our university to buy a copy (it was practically the last remaining one, so we were lucky) and set ourselves to print it out, the results eventually filling several large filing cabinets. The sweat of doing this was considerable—the job took several years—but the consequent boon was enormous; and in a sense it seemed to transform our whole enterprise. Here, without stirring from one's office, we had what no scholar of Lee's day, or even Moore himself till the last year or two of his life, had enjoyed: immediate access to the whole Defoe canon or supposed canon. One could read, re-read, and compare his works without the need for journeys to distant libraries and endless laborious note taking.

We also obtained, and printed out, a microfilm of Trent's unpublished bibliography (the results filled fourteen ring binders), as well as microfilms of long runs of eighteenth-century periodicals. Meanwhile, we had been acquiring copies of all articles and books about Defoe attributions, so far as we could trace them, including items going back to the early days of *Notes and Queries*. Some very valuable work on individual items had been done recently by Pat Rogers, Alan Downie, and others; and we discovered that during the 1960s and 1970s a more systematic assault on the current canon had been launched by Rodney Baine, who had very convincingly de-attributed some of Defoe's supposed works on the supernatural (*The History of Duncan Campbell*, *The Dumb Philosopher*, and the like) and had made an exhaustive examination of George Chalmers's papers—coming to the unnerving conclusion that "it should now be clear that Chalmers's assignment of any particular item to Defoe constitutes in itself no evidence that Defoe wrote it."

In 1988 we published *The Canonisation of*

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Daniel Defoe. Reviewers, on the whole, were very kind to it. The *New York Review of Books* said: "The study of Daniel Defoe has been shaken by major tremors: the Richter scale will be vibrating for years to come," and the verdict of the *Times Literary Supplement* was that "Furbank and Owens . . . have destroyed, once and for all, the authority of the Defoe canon . . . they have demonstrated the need for a new bibliography, a new canon." This was cheering; but it left us with the problem of where to go from there. The answer depended, in turn, on the question: What did the real Defoe specialists think of us? Apart from Maximillian Novak, none of them had challenged any of our articles. Did this mean that they were utterly convinced by us, or alternatively that they regarded us as harmless lunatics? We supposed that neither could be exactly the case, but it was hard to see how to test it. Without more assurance on the matter, or indeed in any case—we told ourselves—we could hardly be expected to dismantle and reconstruct the towering Defoe canon single-handedly.

So for a time we turned to other occupations. But then in 1991 we were invited, and agreed, to compile the "Defoe" entry for the forthcoming new edition of the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature.* This presented us with a problem. For part of our complaint against the creators of the Defoe canon was that, for the most part, they had introduced new attributions silently and without explanation. But to de-attribute silently (and this is all that the format of the *Cambridge Bibliography* would allow) might surely be said to be just as bad. We pondered this, and eventually there seemed to be only one answer: to discuss our de-attributing—of which we anticipated there might be all too much—in a separate book, giving evidence and reasons for our decisions.

In a word, the job that we had shied away from as absurd and overweening, the systematic questioning of every item in the canon, would have to be undertaken after all. So we set to work on it, doggedly, thanking heaven that there were two of us. It took three or four more years; and the result, *Defoe De-Attributions,* was published in 1994. It listed 252 works in Moore's *Checklist* that we considered had no right to be there, giving in each case the genealogy of the attribution, a brief summary of the work itself, and an explanation of the reasons prompting us to reject it.

The *Canonisation* received quite a small flood of reviews. Our new book, *Defoe De-Attributions,* has, so far, received rather few, though on the other hand they have been encouraging. The *Times Literary Supplement* spoke of our earlier book as "devastating" and said that, for our new book, "All Defoe scholars and other specialists in the period are greatly in their debt." In similar tones, J. Paul Hunter, in *Eighteenth-Century Fiction,* said that we deserved "enormous credit" and that "the Furbank-Owens challenge is much larger than an attack on Defoe scholars and editing; it is ultimately an attack on reader gullibility, the ethos of the academy, and the refusal of scholars generally to develop and consider more systematic examinations of evidence."

We expected that some reviewers might call us butcherly, and of course they may yet do so, but this has not so far happened. But certainly we do not suppose that we have always got things right or that evidence will not turn up, or may already be known, that will overturn some of our judgments. We could also be accused of being inquisitorial and wanting to stifle all attempts to make attributions to Defoe, but that we would deny. What we object to is not the making or suggesting of new ascriptions, which could well be very fruitful and rewarding; we are merely attacking certain wrong and confusing ways of putting new attributions into circulation.

There remains one more thing for us to do. This is to compile a new descriptive list or critical bibliography of the works that can be regarded as certainly, or as probably, by Defoe, summarizing the content of each work, tracing the history of its ascription, and assembling and discussing the evidence supporting it—in a word, following in the footsteps of Trent. Undoubtedly the Defoe it revealed would be a lot easier to comprehend than the strange bundle of anomalies presented by Moore; and the virtue of explicitness, as opposed to a mere assertion of authority, seems plain to see. Of course, the fate of Trent cannot but haunt us; and we sometimes ask ourselves, as no doubt he did, whether people actually *want* a new bibliography of Defoe. Since Defoe is one of the "glories of English literature," we suppose they ought to; and at all events, if for no other reason than sheer obstinacy, that is what we mean to undertake.

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The Curator of Dreams

MICHAEL S. GLASER

It is, perhaps, the noose
I put my own neck in,

when I go to my children thinking
I might save them

from their nightmare dreams,
and so speak their names,

gently, again and again,
saying, "I love you,"

stroking their hair
with such priestly care

I imagine old demon truth
would not dare

to fill their ears
with my own nightmare fears

telling them what they have already
begun to understand:

that there is
nothing I can do

to relieve their pain,
but whisper

these words, my prayers,
their names.

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The Writing Life

ARTHUR KRYSTAL

Writers are different from other people. Not all writers—not those who write only for wages—but those for whom writing is no less necessary than sleeping, who receive the continuing news of their existence as potential lines on a page. For them, what happens happens in order to be turned into verse or prose. And so literature itself may be understood as sheer ego channeled into print, undertaken with the perfect conviction that experience is concluded only upon being written down.

What an extraordinary assumption! What's wrong with living one's life without consecrating it to the written word? Why imagine that one's thoughts and feelings must be shared with others? Such intimacy, even when arriving in the guise of fiction, seems shameless, for despite the liberties novelists take with events, they are in the business of making private moments public. Like the spy as true believer, novelists subsume the fate and feelings of others to the greater good. Graham Greene, a writer who knew something about spying, felt there was "a splinter of ice in the heart of a writer"—a splinter, one might add, that could serve as an ice pick.

This lesson was forcibly brought home to some New York socialites when Truman Capote, an old friend, skewered them in "À la Cote Basque" (*Esquire*, November 1975). Indiscretions that had until then been kept in the family were now bruited in a national magazine. Amazed and hurt, Capote's rich pals dropped him. Oddly enough, Capote seemed shocked in return. Apparently, he had thought he could get away with pillorying his patrician friends in public. Finally realizing that he had burned his bridges to their penthouses and estates, Capote pathetically complained, "But they know I'm a writer. I don't understand it."

Lack of comprehension, however, is usually on the side of non-writers, those hard-pressed to understand how a friend could betray them in print. Why should they understand? They aren't writers, the writing life is not life as they know it, and no explanation can justify the writer's behavior. It's an apt tag, "the writing life," the two words expressing a symbiotic relation while simultaneously blurring the distinction between them. Writing is a profession, we know, but it is also something more; otherwise doctors would talk of the "medical life" and lawyers of the "legal life." Curiously, the only other means of earning a living that is referred to as "a life" is prostitution. Prostitutes talk about what they do as being "in the life," and, like writers, theirs is a way of life that impedes living unself-consciously, denying them full participation in experience.

Both the writer and the prostitute detach themselves from certain moments in life in order to practice their trades; both detach themselves from experience in order to make others more aware of it. Perhaps prostitutes can make love honestly when not with a trick; writers, however, sooner or later treat all of life as a trick, something to turn to their advantage. All this is something of an exaggeration, but what writer would deny that the psychology of the literary artist, insofar as it may be said to be different from other people's, consists in the cultivation of the self for the expressed purpose of communicating the self's progress through life?

Kierkegaard says somewhere that there are two ways to live: one can suffer or one can be a professor of another's suffering. By "professor," Kierkegaard means someone protected from terrible suffering by highly developed

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faculties of observation and contemplation. If only in this regard, Kierkegaard's professor resembles Nietzsche's "Artist," someone who lives at a remove from life's most deeply felt moments. Artists, writes Nietzsche, are not men of great passion, being far too busy interpreting themselves to have any shame about themselves. Nor can they feel shame before great passion, since they are always exploiting passion in their art. The compulsion to use life to beget art, Nietzsche tells us, smacks of vampirism, a draining of emotion that would ordinarily be spent in passion.

Sounds good, but are there indisputable truths about the artistic temperament? To what degree, if any, is the artist more self-conscious than the non-artist, and how do we go about measuring the difference? Is it fair to say that the artist or the professor of suffering is less in step with the ordinary rhythms of life than someone who does not reflect on those rhythms? And finally, we might ask whether the two temperaments are mutually exclusive. Nietzsche evidently believed so, professing that one either lives *or* that one lives as an artist—that is, one either suffers *or* one is a professor of others' suffering.

Of course, it is only writers and intellectuals who gnaw at these questions, wondering whether writing prevents them from knowing life in a way that other people know it. The anxiety comes with the territory. Someone always thinking about how to transform experience into art may be unable to appreciate the experience for what it really is—as if too much awareness of living must get in the way of living. Henry James, who believed the writer should be someone on whom nothing is lost, also knew that this creed makes it impossible to lose oneself in experience. And this ambivalence about art overriding life explains much about James's own art and life. Yeats too felt the conflict: "The intellect of man is forced to choose / Perfection of the life, or of the work." Never totally at ease with the choice he made, Yeats's doubt would resurface in a poignant journal entry: "I might have lived instead." But like James, Yeats never really had a choice in the matter. He could no more have "lived instead" than not tied Ireland and Maud Gonne to poetry. Everything was linked to poetry, because in some sense everything was not enough *without* poetry.

So what is missing—what is missing that creates the need to write? Peace of mind is as good an answer as any, for what writer—or philosopher for that matter—begins work because he or she is at peace with the world? Novalis thought *philosophy* but another word for *homesickness*, the wish to feel everywhere at home; and down through the years more than one writer has mused that writing is an attempt to recapture the warmth and comfort of childhood (and home) or viewed it as a means to imagine a security never known at all. Possibly this nostalgia for a world either lost or never possessed underlies all serious literary work, since the very act of creation implies a certain lacking or failure in the world.

To speak of such matters evokes certain philosophical preoccupations that may not at first seem pertinent to poetry and fiction. All the same, if existence were sufficient to make us satisfied with our knowledge of existence, we'd feel little desire to philosophize or to create. We would, in short, already be home. But the world is not, for those who make a fetish of consciousness, the repository of absolute answers. Something is, if not wrong, then beyond understanding; and, as philosophers like to tell us, consciousness itself keeps knowledge and truth a synapse apart.

But if the pen knows anything at all, it knows that one day it must stop moving—that too is part of the mystery. Death waits, and we, each in our own way, go to meet it. This is not to suggest that death must constantly figure in literature but to acknowledge that the literature that matters is always about the triumph or failure of the human spirit, a struggle that would be meaningless if life itself were not, in the end, terminal. So while mortality may not define the scope of literature, it does suggest the subtext of creativity, the point where the desire to create and the end of all creation meet.

Just as consciousness precludes the positing of intellectual absolutes, it also underlines the one truth none of us may escape. Death shadows us, and in a sense death creates us, shaping how we think and act. A being whose existence is eternal would probably not inquire too deeply into its meaning or demand the reassurances that mortals clamor for. Nor perhaps would beauty loom large in paradise if, as Wallace Stevens believed, death is the mother of beauty. What need for beauty in life everlasting? Would anyone debate the point that

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we find beauty in life because life itself is so brief, that we create art because art is not part of creation, and that we philosophize because we can never be sure that knowledge is synonymous with truth?

Of course, not even philosophers and board-certified melancholics dwell constantly on their own deaths. No one lives as if he or she were about to keel over. Death shadows us but does not darken the ground on which we walk, and even the gloomiest thinker may be interrupted by life's more trivial crises. Nowhere is this more nicely sketched than in Balzac's *Le Peau de chagrin* at the point when the young hero pauses to reflect on all the dead civilizations that have come and gone. He contemplates the pitifully brief time we have on this earth and wonders whether our triumphs, loves, failures, and hatreds really amount to anything, if we are only to become an undetectable speck in the future. Clearly, it is all meaningless, all for nothing—until, that is (here Balzac jumps in), a valet enters the room to announce: "*Madame la comtesse* says that she is expecting you." Suddenly things are definitely looking up. Suddenly life is filled with promise. Yes, it's the rare philosopher whose existential suffering cannot be softened by a pair of soft arms.

But what sort of suffering is this? Surely not the kind requisite to the production of profound works of art or philosophy. The contemplative spirit, if it intends to represent the human condition, must have its nose in the muck of human experience, inhaling love, pain, failure, success, joy, and heartache, without which the act of thinking becomes an abstract exercise in self-consciousness. Indeed, in extreme cases, when the body must scrabble to exist, metaphysics is a luxury beyond the reach of even the most self-conscious. In other words, there comes a point when neither the artist nor the philosopher, however much he may desire or feel it necessary, can avoid the passion and suffering that an imperfect world doles out.

Consider the case of Primo Levi, a writer whose tortured self-consciousness embraced both passion and suffering. As a young man, Levi had spent more than a year in Auschwitz, and though he became a writer, he never became a professor of suffering; though an artist, he still felt great shame in living. Anyone who has read Levi's *The Drowned and the Saved* cannot help having been struck by the confession of shame he felt while in the camps. It was shame that had nothing to do with the fact that he survived while millions died but with what he saw and endured. In a terrible way, it makes sense. The horror, the horrible enormity of the event, precludes the idea of innocence. Why should someone suffer so much, have so much cruelty inflicted on mind and body, if one is truly innocent? Life had shamed Levi, and there was nothing he could do, he admitted, to rid himself of this shame.

He wrote books, both fiction and non-fiction, but did they comprehend or communicate what happened? If writing was a way of bearing witness and of revealing what man is capable of, it was for Levi also a way of dealing with memory, of sustaining life against the wish to erase the knowledge stored in memory. But eventually this knowledge overwhelmed him. More than forty years after he left the *lagers*, Auschwitz finally released him. Levi committed suicide—not because he was an artist or a professor of suffering but because there came a moment when art could no longer save him, when the shame of experience finally became more powerful than the wish to create from that experience. It was then that Primo Levi chose to become nothing rather than something.

Whatever the degree of self-consciousness involved in the writing life, total detachment is not possible; if it were, people would never think to write, and writers never think to take their own lives. "A literary artist, besides being in a sense immune from experience," observed Desmond MacCarthy, "must also be at the mercy of it, so that he cannot tell afterwards whether he has owed more to the naive impulses which drove him to meet life, or to the aloofness which softly and inevitably disentangled him again." This seems a fairer statement than Nietzsche's strictures regarding the artist's susceptibility to great passion. The writer, in fact, may both feel and exploit passion, and whether he feels it any less intensely than others is not for us to say.

The more commonly held opinion, of course, is that artists feel more deeply than non-artists, being more sensitive to the vicissitudes of life. Who knows? It is just as likely that literary artists have no special dispensation when it comes to feeling. What separates them from non-artists is not a special capacity for joy or

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The 1996 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

The Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science

WHERE DOES THE WEIRDNESS GO? WHY QUANTUM MECHANICS IS STRANGE, BUT NOT AS STRANGE AS YOU THINK. *David Lindley. Basic Books. $24.*

Citation: Some bits of science are auspicious subjects for popular accounts and some are not. Is there anything more at odds with our everyday, personal, experiential world than quantum mechanics? David Lindley's fine book *Where Does the Weirdness Go?* persuades non-physicists that counterintuitive does not imply irrational. Its contents do battle with all the pseudoscientific, even theological, invocations of quantum mechanics now vying for followers and respectability. Too many books about science leave the reader on the outside. This book tackles a small and well-defined chunk of reality and draws in the reader with an elegantly contrived explanation. It tells an engaging story in clear and logical fashion and leaves the reader with a fine sense of personal involvement.

The Christian Gauss Award

WHAT IS PASTORAL? *Paul Alpers. University of Chicago Press. $34.95.*

Citation: Paul Alpers in *What Is Pastoral?* confronts the vexing theoretical questions involved in the term *pastoral* at the same time as he presents a comprehensive analysis of the long and honorable literary tradition contained within this term. The magnitude of Paul Alpers's project is magisterial, for it is based on many years of sustained thought and on learning that is at once broad and deep. Within the framework he has adopted, Alpers is able to focus on many of the great figures within Western literary tradition and to show how pastoral has invaded a number of different literary genres, for instance, drama and the novel. There is a lot of integrity and passion—a sheer love of literature—behind Alpers's demonstration that pastoral really works. This book, with its rare combination of grandeur and modesty, is beautifully and lovingly written.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award

CODEX TELLERIANO-REMENSIS: RITUAL, DIVINATION, AND HISTORY IN A PICTORIAL AZTEC MANUSCRIPT. *Eloise Quiñones Keber. University of Texas Press. $75.*

Citation: Eloise Quiñones Keber's *Codex Telleriano-Remensis* is notable not only for its stunning visual beauty, but for the fact that it represents an immense gift to the entire community of scholars who cannot consult the codex firsthand. There is in it a wealth of material embedded in its three parts: the ritual calendar; the Tonamatl, or book of days; and the annals, or historical records. While the circumstances surrounding its preparation and its subsequent history are not absolutely clear, the *Codex* represents among other things the efforts of the invading Spanish to understand the alien culture and especially the alien religion. Indian artists were set the task of producing significant texts that revealed their past and their values, and the *Codex* contains these as well as the Spanish efforts to understand them. Dr. Quiñones Keber's interpretation of this sixteenth-century document is especially timely and provocative.

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suffering but the need to transform their emotional life into art and the realization that they have precious little choice in the matter. One does not ask to be a poet or novelist (only poseurs aspire to the title); one writes because there's no help for it, because one doesn't really have a choice in the matter.

If there is one defining characteristic of those who are compelled to bend the sounds and nuances of words to their will, it might be the notion that writing, more than being just a force in one's life, is a means of making sense of that life. To write about life and to live are reciprocal modes of being. The person who writes and the person who lives complement each another, each feeds off the other, each strives for the knowledge that may help both to understand themselves.

In his letters, John Keats articulates the consciousness of a man striving to know himself. Thinking about the soul, not in the strictly Christian sense but as a means for individual fulfillment, he writes to his brother George that the soul is an "*Intelligence destined to possess the sense of Identity.*" But identity is not so easy to acquire. Being a poet, he thinks himself "the most unpoetical of any thing in existence; because he has no Identity": he too readily fills other bodies and enters other minds; he is too "capable of being in uncertainties." Now while this gives him material to write about, it also causes him great distress. "I live under an everlasting restraint," he confides, "never relieved except when I am composing—So I will write away."

Few writers deserve our gratitude more than Keats for writing away. The irony of course is that we profit by his distress, just as we benefit from the discomfort that compels all great writers to write. That "everlasting restraint" is the burden of self-consciousness, which stimulates composition in order to define further its own nature. Keats's relief when writing is not the result of conquering his inhibitions; it is based in the activity of realizing the self. When composing, he composes himself; composing, he lets his Intelligence create its Identity.

That is perhaps the closest we may come to understanding the writing life, a life intent on acquiring an identity as both artist and individual. What does a poem or novel say except this is what happened, this is what I learned, and this is, insofar as I am able to say, who I am? Every literary work thus becomes the ghost of someone who once passed this way. "Whoever touches this [book]," Walt Whitman promised, "touches a man." These are the ghosts that, one hopes, will continue to haunt us. For it is comforting to know that somewhere, at some time, a person felt the need to speak, who looked at a sheet of paper and stained the uninviting whiteness of eternity with the small, irregular symbols that, whatever their shape and however their arrangement, always say: Know Me.

Moderation in Defense of Extremism

GREAT BOOKS: MY ADVENTURES WITH HOMER, ROUSSEAU, WOOLF, AND OTHER INDESTRUCTIBLE WRITERS OF THE WESTERN WORLD. *By David Denby. Simon & Schuster. $30.*

Reviewed by ALAN RUTENBERG

David Denby, the film critic of *New York* magazine, presents himself as a poorly defined, forty-eight-year-old liberal, immersed in the unbearable lightness of movies and television and magazine articles, mildly attentive to the culture wars, uncertain of his deepest beliefs. Therefore, he tells us, thirty years after he first took the two famous general education courses at Columbia University, he returned to school to repeat both Literature Humanities and Contemporary Civilization. Some things have obviously changed: "In my day, back in the early sixties, the College was heavily populated with city Jews and Italian-Americans, bookish, sallow young men (like me) preoccupied with Sartre and Kafka, Beethoven and the Modern Jazz Quartet." Still the reading list, consisting of some of the canonical works of Western literature and political philosophy, remains almost the same—with the addition of several women: Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir.

Mr. Denby's memoir follows the shape of the school year, with individual chapters devoted to most of the authors on the syllabus. In the slightly idiosyncratic order of Denby's

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Essential Reading

What's Happened to the Humanities?

Edited by Alvin Kernan

With a foreword by
William Bowen and Harold Shapiro

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narration, the first semester includes Homer, Sappho, Plato, Sophocles, Aristotle, Aeschylus, Euripides, Virgil, the Old Testament, the New Testament, Augustine, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Locke; in the second semester he discusses Dante, Boccaccio, Hume, Kant, Montaigne, Rousseau, Shakespeare, Hegel, Austen, Marx, Mill, Nietzsche, Beauvoir, Conrad, and Woolf.

Denby offers diligent summaries of the books he studied and sometimes vivid reports of classroom discussions; his portraits of his professors are especially interesting. The most impressive of them is certainly Edward Tayler, a senior English professor whose field is Shakespeare, Milton, and the English Renaissance; his scrupulous method of close analysis, relying on the traditional conventions of formal criticism, yields an impressively resonant series of readings. Easily the most au courant of his professors is Anders Stephanson, a young Swedish scholar of American foreign policy, who is not quite a true representative of what Denby describes as "the academic left"; in the case of Professor Stephanson, the aggressive relativist stance that has become emblematic of the academic left is checked in some measure by his traditional Oxford education and his admiration for Anglo-American political freedoms.

In fairness to David Denby, I must say that he does not claim to offer original or interesting criticism of the "great books," nor does he claim to provide a careful analysis of the culture wars. He does produce precisely what one would expect of a liberal film critic invited to write for the current version of *The New Yorker* (three chapters first appeared there): a lucid journalistic account with a considerable emphasis on personalities, a studied, ironic presentation of autobiography, and a sophisticated liberal politics that maintains a tacit distance from the academic left.

Mr. Denby is a perfect representative of a certain journalistic sensibility; he attempts to portray himself as the sort of courageous moderate whom Isaiah Berlin describes in his 1970 Romanes Lecture, "Fathers and Children: Turgenev and the Liberal Predicament." Berlin writes that "men of this sort need a good deal of courage to resist magnetization by either polar force and to urge moderation in a disturbed situation . . . the middle ground is a notoriously exposed, dangerous, and ungrateful position." Unfortunately, the middle ground that Denby occupies is not now the position that requires courage; the middle ground is rather the all-too-comfortable preserve of the fashionable journalist.

In Denby's chapter on Joseph Conrad, his moderate position is especially clear. The classes on Conrad are devoted, unsurprisingly enough, to a highly political discussion of *Heart of Darkness.* Denby is capable of the following sequence of responses. First he registers the pleasure of his private reading experience; he finds in Conrad "immense pride, and immense contempt; a mood of barely contained revolt; and sardonic humor approaching malevolence." Conrad's prose "reveled in sensation, in extreme acts and grotesque violence . . . in shivering enigmas and richly phrased premonitions and frights."

Describing himself as a liberal humanist, Denby ruefully notes that "the old way of reading fiction for pleasure—my falling once again under Conrad's spell—has been declared naive and possibly reactionary, a submission to political values whose nature is disguised, precisely, by the pleasures of the narrative." He is angry that critics of Conrad such as Chinua Achebe and Edward Said, who emphasize "the mentality of imperial domination," offer "not simply a different interpretation of this or that work but something close to an attack on the moral legitimacy of literature itself." Professor Said, Mr. Denby reports, describes *Heart of Darkness* as "an organic part of the 'scramble for Africa,' a work that has functioned ever since to reassure Westerners that they had the right to rule the Third World."

But Denby then acknowledges the force of the politically correct attack on literature: "However much I disliked Achebe and Said's approach—their fear of narrative pleasure, their demand for correct attitudes . . . however wrong or extreme in individual cases, the academic left has alerted readers to the possible hidden assumptions in language and point of view." With these modest criticisms of the academic left, Denby maintains at least the appearance and the sentiments of a liberal position. In fact throughout his memoir he reacts to the various poses of the academic left with a rather firm, unfashionable resistance, calling upon an older, liberal intellectual tradition that respects both literary and ethical

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standards, but he also acknowledges the force of the new dispensation—not actually capitulating to the academic left, but often acceding to its terms of reference and debate.

Denby's reading of Jane Austen offers another example of this pattern. He first recalls, with evident approval, that "for my generation of literature majors, the delicate, subtle, yet fiercely candid Jane Austen laid down a most insistent demand. The common (unspoken) assumption was that if you really understood Jane Austen's irony in *Emma* or *Pride and Prejudice*, you could never be the same person again." Yet he then largely abandons the prospect of a stable understanding of Jane Austen, and applies to his reading of *Pride and Prejudice* a view suspiciously in tune with the most melodramatic relativism of the academic left, transforming her controlled irony into the abyss of deconstruction, complete with its standard vocabulary of loss, peril, and doubleness: "Reading Jane Austen, you lost your moral innocence and relinquished assurance for something else—complexity, perhaps. Every force, every perception was both enriched and imperiled by doubleness: Life was not what it seemed."

This highly charged reading also reflects Denby's taste in the "great books"; he acknowledges his attraction to the qualities of energy, play, vivacity, speed, and perversity, qualities that he finds most conspicuously in his favorite authors: Euripides, Boccaccio, Machiavelli, and Nietzsche. Still, Jane Austen's implied criticism of these qualities and these authors also elicits his attention. He writes, for instance, that "in Jane Austen, the mating game assumes dimensions that Boccaccio ignored—the joining of understanding and temperament, property and taste, as well as body and body." In his treatment of Jane Austen, Denby balances, however oddly, a defense of the neoclassical virtues with a genteel affirmation of the tactics of deconstruction.

In his consideration of Nietzsche, Denby addresses the difficult and central problem of relativism directly. He understands that Nietzsche establishes the groundwork for the relativist stance of the academic left, and he first identifies himself with Nietzsche. He writes: "Like Nietzsche—and like members of the academic left—I did not believe in metaphysical truth. I was not, in the jargon, a 'foundationalist.' That is, I did not believe that values existed outside of human practice. On the contrary, values would exist in whatever form we give them." But even here Denby finds a moderate position, apparently influenced by the currently popular form of pragmatism. He claims: "But still, you could judge—in life, and by extension, in literature. You did not need some foundational notion, a "transcendent" or "universal" notion of literary value, in order to say that Jane Austen was a great writer worthy of study and emulation and Alice Walker was not. Instead, you had to make the case for pleasure from the ground up." Denby manages to conclude his Nietzsche chapter as the moderate champion of "the case for the most complex pleasures"—a case which the academic left has ruled out "as some sort of reactionary formation."

Yet Denby retains toward the left a quite sentimental attachment, and in his chapter on Marx his pose of moderation disappears. His youthful involvement in the protests and poses of the sixties, while described with some ironic distance at various points in his memoir, clearly retains its influence: in this chapter, much more than elsewhere, his critical faculties are set aside. He reports that when he attended a lecture highly critical of Marx delivered by the pre-eminent historian of Marxist thought, Lezsek Kolakowski, "there was an uneasy stirring in the room, a painful shortening of breath, and then a few walkouts. Parts of Columbia's faculty . . . had cut their intellectual eyeteeth on Marx and still considered Marx's work the essential element of any serious analysis of modern society." Denby does acknowledge that parts of the academic left are highly skeptical of free speech and other democratic institutions and liberties, and that Kolakowski deserves attention as a critic of such attitudes, but this note of moderation passes fairly quickly.

Denby then continues: "Few people in the Law School auditorium, I would guess, had expected Kolakowski's contempt to be quite so unwavering, so unmodulated in its fervor. I felt the shock myself. His mockery, I thought, was exaggeratedly bitter. He appeared to be punishing himself for his long absorption in Marxism." The normally scrupulous Denby, after reading excerpts from the early Marx, can criticize Kolakowski's "contempt" for Marx with unusual certainty: "Marx's critique of capitalism and what it does to human beings

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cannot be simply dismissed in derision and irony. . . . Kolakowski was entitled to his bitterness, but, having read a little Marx, we could say Kolakowski was extravagant, he was mistaken." Anyone who has read Kolakowski's truly magisterial criticism of Marxist thought, *Main Currents of Marxism,* will certainly find this crude, to put it gently.

Leszek Kolakowski, a man of notable personal presence, stands as the one scholar of the very highest rank whom David Denby actually encounters in his year of remedial education. It is both remarkable and revealing that in his rather cynical response to Kolakowski, Denby fails to recognize the gravity of an exceptionally superior mind, a living exemplar of the Western intellectual tradition. While Kolakowski, in his consistent denunciation of Marx, scarcely places himself in the ambivalent liberal predicament that Isaiah Berlin describes, he nevertheless remains a model of real intellectual courage. Denby, however, offers the mere pose of courage in his own quite comfortable version of the liberal predicament. Listening to Kolakowski, it never occurs to Denby to examine his sentimental attachment to the left. It never occurs to him that while there may indeed be disturbed situations in which it is courageous to counsel moderation and to occupy the middle ground, the present situation in our universities, just possibly, is not one of them.

Docudrama

THE DAY THE PRESSES STOPPED. *By David Rudenstine. University of California Press. $34.95.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH D. BECKER

Minutes after the Supreme Court heard argument in the Pentagon Papers case, Justice John Harlan remarked at the conference of the justices—according to notes of Justice Douglas—that the case was a judicial "travesty." Now, precisely twenty-five years later, Professor Rudenstine's exhaustive, balanced, and immensely readable study tells us why.

In 1969, a forty-seven-volume "History of U.S. Decision Making Process on Vietnam Policy" covering the period 1945 to 1967 was completed by a Pentagon team pursuant to a directive of Robert McNamara, then secretary of defense. The volumes were classified as "top secret-sensitive." Four of the volumes, consisting of diplomatic correspondence that might have embarrassed foreign governments if published, were thought by the senior editors to be "very sensitive." Only fifteen copies were made. One was given to Henry Kissinger, the national security adviser. Two copies were deposited with the RAND Corporation.

For Daniel Ellsberg, one of the historians on the Pentagon team, a "genius" (according to Kissinger) recently converted to the cause of the doves, the "Pentagon Papers" (as they were soon to be called) were epiphanic. He was to say that the Papers demonstrated "how the same sets of alternatives began to appear to each President. . . . The decisions year after year were to continue the war, although all predictions pointed to a continued stalemate with this kind of approach and thus to prolong the war indefinitely." The Papers proved government deception about the aims and conduct of the war, he thought. Seized by the romantic notion that the underlying facts, if published, would compel the administration to get out of Vietnam, he decided to go public.

Ellsberg had access to the Papers deposited with RAND. Working at night, over a period of weeks, he made additional copies. He then allowed Neil Sheehan, a reporter for the *New York Times* who had served in Vietnam and detested the war, to copy all the Papers except the four sensitive diplomatic volumes.

Over the next three months, in extraordinary secrecy, *Times* reporters edited the Papers while a great debate about publication raged at the top: the *Times* executives were doubtful; the editors champed at the bit. In the event, without inquiry of government officials about dangers to national security (for which there was journalistic precedent), and in the teeth of opposition from its regular law firm, the *Times* published the first installment of the Pentagon Papers in its Sunday edition of June 13, 1971.

President Nixon and his attorney general, John Mitchell, were unperturbed by the Sunday installment. On Monday, however, Kissinger was alarmed: he knew the Papers and

✪ JOSEPH D. BECKER practices law in New York City.

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rightly feared that future installments, especially if taken from the four diplomatic volumes (which the *Times* did not have), would embarrass diplomatic efforts then under way. Injecting fuel into the fire of Nixon's old animus for the *Times*, he provoked an order to the Department of Justice to stop further publication.

The task fell to a widely unknown lawyer serving as assistant attorney general for internal security, Robert Mardian. Informed by the able William Rehnquist (then a colleague in the department) of the dictum in *Near v. Minnesota* (1931) that prior restraints of the press were unconstitutional except in cases of extreme danger to national security (such as publication of the sailing dates of troop transports), Mardian constructed a novel theory: the Pentagon Papers had been properly classified as "top secret"; hence, unauthorized publication would necessarily endanger national security and could be stopped. The theory was rather insouciant about the facts.

Mardian's theory may also have been compelled by a practical problem: the government lawyers did not know, and could not quickly discover, what perils (if any) the forty-seven volumes held. Nor did they know whether the *Times* had all of the Papers and how much of them would be published. With next installments imminent, a broad argument from the fearful fact of top-secret classification would, perhaps, finesse any need for particulars.

The first shot by the government was a telegram from Mitchell to the *Times* on Monday, June 14, asserting that publication of information from the Papers was "directly prohibited" by section 793 of the espionage statutes. (This was a considerable overstatement.) Mitchell demanded cessation of publication and return of the Papers. The *Times* refused.

The government now set out to stop publication of the next, fourth installment. It would ask a federal judge in Manhattan to grant a prior restraining order freezing publication for a few days and, then, a preliminary injunction stopping further installments for the duration of the civil trial.

At the threshold, the government faced the difficulty that such orders are denied even in ordinary cases absent proof of a threat of "irreparable injury"; more would certainly be demanded to stop conduct protected by the First Amendment. To be sure, strong cases are conceivable: suppose (as Archibald Cox hypothesized) that, during the Second World War, the *Times* decided to report that German codes had been broken at Bletchley; surely that could have been stopped. The government's hasty submission to the court on Tuesday, June 15, fell far short of that.

The judge, Murray Gurfein, to whom the submission was made was a very able lawyer but had taken his seat on the bench only days before. The preliminary decision Judge Gurfein was asked to make was of immense consequence: not only would he determine the substantive constitutional issue whether the circumstances warranted prior restraint of a newspaper; he would also determine the collateral, practical matter of the *pace* of the case. As events proved, the frenzied velocity of the proceeding worked to conceal the facts and determine the outcome.

It was asking a great deal of a tyro judge to ignore the menacing, if unsubstantiated, argument of the government from the simple fact of top-secret classification. Judge Gurfein could have said, "Come back when you can identify statements in the Papers that seriously threaten the Republic." Days later, Gerhard Gesell, a veteran federal judge in Washington, did just that when the government moved for a prior restraint against the *Washington Post* for publishing an installment of the Papers. But Gurfein yielded. He ordered the *Times* to stop the presses until Saturday afternoon. His reason: the temporary harm to the *Times* is "far outweighed by the irreparable harm that could be done to the interest of the United States Government if it should ultimately prevail." As there had not been any *proof* of the harm that would befall the government, Judge Gurfein's order was technically unfounded; perhaps the electric charge on the case was too high. But he may also have reflected, justifiably, that, as the *Times* had waited three months to publish the first installment, the short interruption would not do much damage to the paper's First Amendment rights or to the public's right to know.

On this view, the judge might have given the government even more time to define the extent of the damage it feared. Plainly, the Justice Department had not digested the forty-seven volumes—seven thousand pages—of the Papers in two days. What is more, a deeper freeze might have promoted negotiations be-

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tween the parties and the realization, manifest ten days later, that less than five percent of the Papers (substantially in the four diplomatic volumes the *Times* did not have) was seriously troubling to the government.

But Judge Gurfein chose to rush into an extraordinary evidentiary hearing, partly public and partly private (the latter of questionable legality), on the Friday. Mr. Rudenstine does a superb job tracing the lines of argument of the parties, the testimony of the government witnesses, and the oscillations of the judge. Initially hostile to the *Times* for its refusal, on doctrinaire First Amendment grounds, to sit down with the government to identify any truly dangerous documents, Gurfein was transformed into a defender of the press by the vagaries of the ill-prepared witnesses: either they would not (under Mardian's strictures) pinpoint dangerous items in the Papers or, when driven to particulars, they would identify immaterial items.

The decision came the next day: Judge Gurfein held that none of the perhaps relevant espionage statutes applied to newspaper publication, and, while some of the Papers might cause "jitters," none appeared to "vitally affect the security of the Nation." He concluded with a ringing affirmation of the First Amendment and denied the government's application for a preliminary injunction.

The government's dash to the federal court of appeals was only a pit stop in the race to the Supreme Court. Mardian, chastened, now authorized his lawyers to make specific reference to hot items in the Papers. An extraordinary appendix of documents thought to be alarming was submitted to the full appeals court (eight judges, not the usual three). The upshot was that on Wednesday, June 22 (only a week after proceedings commenced in the lower court), a majority of the court reversed the decision below and ordered Judge Gurfein to conduct a new hearing to determine whether any of the items specified in the appendix "pose such grave and immediate danger to the security of the United States" as to justify prohibition. Although this was the first authoritative articulation of the relevant legal standard for assessing the evidence, it was mooted by proceedings in the Supreme Court.

The parties, joined by the *Post* (which, Rudenstine attentively shows, had run an easier gauntlet in Washington), were now before the Supreme Court; they had scaled the federal judiciary to its peak in fourteen days. At his best here, Rudenstine closely studies the tactics, briefs, and oral arguments of the lawyers and the conference notes and opinions of the justices.

The government was now represented by Solicitor General Erwin N. Griswold, former Dean of the Harvard Law School, among the ablest Supreme Court advocates of this century. He had one or two days to prepare the critical confidential brief that the Court had authorized. Junking the Mardian theory, he tried, with the help of experts from the State and Defense Departments, to get down to *facts*. His brief made clear, at least, that the government's fears were not a chimera. Its main thrust was that publication of the Papers would delay the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam and the return of our prisoners of war, expose the identities of CIA agents still active in the area, disclose SEATO military plans, and reveal to the Soviets the capacity of U.S. intelligence operations.

The high court was riven. At the post-argument conference, a majority of the justices appeared to concur with Justice Brennan that the government had not sustained the burden of proof. But Justice Blackmun was bitter: he had "nothing but contempt for the *Times*," whose decision to publish was "reprehensible." In the end, six justices could agree only on a brief order simply holding that the government "carries a heavy burden of showing justification for the enforcement of [a prior] restraint" and had not carried the burden here; the precise weight of the burden—what should have been proven, to what degree of certainty—was left for another day. Multiple individual opinions enlarged upon the themes. The *Times* and *Post* were free to publish.

Years later, Dean Griswold acknowledged in his memoirs that what the newspapers chose to publish (if not the entirety of the Papers) was of small consequence. The case vindicated the First Amendment, but Justice Harlan was right: the frenzy *was* a travesty. That the government pressed the Mardian theory at all rather vindicates Goethe's view that there is nothing so terrible as ignorance in action. Mr. Rudenstine, combining great skills as a writer and law teacher, has given us the definitive account of a remarkable case.

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NARCISSISM AND PHILANTHROPY: IDEAS AND TALENT DENIED. *By Gerald Freund. Viking. $24.95.*

Reviewed by PETER FRUMKIN

Criticizing private foundations is like insulting a wealthy relative who is drawing up a will. It is something that should be done only after considerable thought about the consequences. Given the power that foundations wield in many fields, it is hardly surprising that these privileged institutions have rarely been subjected to critical attention. Against this tradition of deference, Gerald Freund's new book takes dead aim at foundations and denounces them for their abandonment of excellence as the final criterion for making grants.

Today, there are more than forty thousand private philanthropic foundations operating in the United States with total assets approaching $200 billion. American foundations disburse about $10 billion in grants annually to non-profit organizations around the country and abroad. By any measure, this is a significant contribution—one that is growing in importance as government grapples with large deficits and the need to control expenditures. The question Gerald Freund invites us to consider is whether this contribution is effective and usefully innovative. This small and informal book provides an answer by probing the contemporary philanthropic landscape in search of administrative aloofness and unwise grant-making priorities. Freund finds a treasure trove of both. With forty years of experience in the field of philanthropy, including work with both the Rockefeller and MacArthur Foundations, Freund is able to take us on a highly intelligent, though thoroughly dismaying, tour of private foundations.

Freund's central concern is that most foundations have stopped seeking out and supporting exceptional individuals, choosing instead to give grants that fit a narrow political agenda driven by an egalitarian ethos. Instead of making grants to a vast legion of community-based organizations that have only a limited effect, Freund argues that foundations should concentrate on supporting the most talented individuals in society: "There are, in every form of human endeavor, individuals who excel more than others, who are endowed with a capacity to advance our common life more than the collective energy of others of the same age, education, and ambition. They are our natural elites."

The most talented and creative individuals, Freund argues, are most capable of coming up with new ideas that can help chart the future. Foundations choose instead, in Freund's view, to adopt an "ostrich like attitude" when it comes to excellence, to view all differences in ability as arbitrary, and to dismiss those born with talent as, in the words of Arnold Toynbee, "having committed a large pre-natal offense against society." The bill of indictment is a broad one, but given the current obsession with promoting equality in many of the largest foundations, it hits its mark with devastating accuracy.

Freund theorizes that foundations have abandoned excellence in part because they have become detached from the rest of society and have stopped seeking advice from leaders in higher education, government, and research institutes. Narcissism and self-absorption, which Freund believes characterize many of the large foundations, are the products of foundation officials closing themselves off from the world around them. Instead of meeting the needs of the world as defined by experts, foundations have defined programmatic goals and grant guidelines that suit only the foundations' inflated sense of their own self-importance. To anyone who has reviewed the grant guidelines of major foundations, Freund's criticism will ring true: rather than emphasizing innovation or creativity, the guidelines almost always emphasize procedural requirements and compliance with foundation-defined results.

In explaining the rejection of excellence as the final criterion for philanthropic grant making, Freund points to the decreasing quality of those working in the foundation field. In place of individuals who have distinguished themselves in other fields and who come to philanthropy with a deep understanding of their chosen fields, foundations have recruited younger staff members with less specialized knowledge and, more important, fewer profes-

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✪ PETER FRUMKIN's article on private foundation management, "Strangled Freedom," appeared in the Autumn 1995 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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sional contacts. Freund notes that this new cadre of philanthropic experts knows little about what the best minds in their fields are thinking and prefers instead to pursue a narrow political agenda. Rather than working with outside experts to design grant programs that support emerging research by the most talented scholars, foundation officials take it upon themselves to define and control the scope of work to be undertaken by their grant recipients. Freund concludes that narcissistic grant making, behind which lie the values and commitments of second-rate foundation professionals and consultants, has little chance of embracing exceptionally talented individuals. Instead, foundations end up making grants to applicants who are willing to contort themselves to fit the criterion of foundation officials.

One of the strengths of *Narcissism and Philanthropy* is that it is guided by a fierce and consistent set of principles and beliefs. Freund rejects philanthropy that is aimed at garnering good public relations, including grants to grass-roots organizations, grants aimed at promoting multicultural programs, and a whole range of grants promoting trendy causes. Nor does Freund countenance philanthropy that simply seeks to promote social equality: "Fairhandedness should not be the primary concern of foundation programs." Freund argues that foundations should support excellence and "consider those who are already good and help them to become better so that they may be scouts penetrating the frontiers of knowledge, opening new opportunities for the future." To those who know the foundation field, this is a very radical notion.

Freund would like to see foundations return to the pursuit of excellence and the support of talented individuals. He gives some examples of the kinds of programs he thinks do this, such as the MacArthur Fellows Program, the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund Writers Program, and the Whiting Foundation's Writers Awards—all projects that the author was involved in either planning or operating. At present, award programs that support talented individuals are the exceptions within the philanthropic world. Freund recognizes that there is room for a variety of substantive directions within philanthropy, but he insists that a central role for foundations must be as talent scouts working to encourage the best minds. Central to Freund's reform agenda for philanthropy is a reminder that ideas are important and that the most pressing social problems, ranging from poverty to urban violence, can only be addressed once these problems are understood. Foundations will need to change significantly. "We need foundations that are user-friendly," he writes, "with policies that emanate from the society of scholars and practitioners, not ones imposed on them. We need foundation officers who see themselves as part of a spectrum of colleagues prepared to listen and engage in open discussion, not as an aloof class who exercise their authority and disdain discussion."

Freund sometimes misses the opportunity to draw out the implications of his observations. After diagnosing philanthropy's penchant for pursuing equality and spurning excellence, Freund fails to make a convincing case—based either on efficiency or effectiveness—for directing money toward promoting talented individuals. To be sure, the amount of money disbursed by foundations, while significant, can never make a serious dent in the problem of social inequality that obsesses the foundation world. Freund, however, misses a chance to support his case for funding individual excellence by pointing out the futility of pumping foundation resources toward community programs that have failed even with long-standing public investment on a much greater scale. Instead, the argument rests mainly on Freund's considerable experience in philanthropy and his personal belief in the necessity of seeking out and supporting talented individuals.

Another problem with Freund's anecdotal review of foundations is that it does not always probe deeply to discover the cause of the troublesome trends that it details. Freund rightly remarks that foundations are no longer directed by staffs who are experts in substantive fields. One possible explanation, not explored in the book, is that a generational shift occurred, one that placed a large number of individuals who came of age in the 1960s into the foundation world and the broader nonprofit sector. Many of these program officers and executive directors of private foundations rejected the business sector and—after careers in non-profit service agencies—turned to philanthropy as a natural next step. The opportunity to "do good" in philanthropy fits neatly with the progressive politics of the 1960s gen-

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eration. Given this broad demographic trend, it is hardly surprising that the baby boomers now running many of the large foundations reject excellence as a culturally constructed and essentially elitist concept.

Narcissism and Philanthropy would also be stronger if its reform agenda were supported by more examples of outstanding individuals who have done great things because—and only because—of foundation support. Part of the problem with Freund's argument is that it is difficult to demonstrate a direct link between individual creative achievement and foundation support, be it a fellowship, a prize, or a research grant. One always asks whether the achievement would have occurred even if no support had been forthcoming.

Still, in the end, Freund presents a compelling criticism of private foundations. Sadly, there is little chance that any of the good ideas in the book will be taken up by the large foundations. With their huge endowments and their freedom from outside pressure, foundations have little reason to change or improve their performance. The distinctive feature of foundations is that they do not depend on any outside resources for their survival and thus can operate with complete impunity. Courageous though Gerald Freund has been in unmasking the narcissism of modern philanthropy, no one should believe for a moment that large foundations, once confronted with his book, will rush to abandon their narrow and egalitarian agendas.

The Big Band Sound

BEETHOVEN HERO. *By Scott Burnham. Princeton University Press. $29.95.*

Reviewed by PETER SCHWENDENER

The subject of this book is a musical style, namely Beethoven's heroic style. Its interest, according to Scott Burnham, lies in the fact that it is "a style to which only a handful of his works can lay unequivocal claim: two symphonies, two piano sonatas, several overtures, a piano concerto." The style has had, in short, an influence that is strikingly out of proportion to the number of pieces it defines, and Burnham positions his study between the limited nature of the style itself and the almost unlimited effect it has had, as he argues, on subsequent musical thought.

Burnham's approach to Beethoven is founded on a fairly minute technical analysis of the pieces in question. The reader's eye, in fact, glazes over a bit as Burnham monitors the coming and going of this or that three-note phrase in the *Eroica* Symphony or similar features of some other heroic piece. Throughout the occasionally thorny analyses of the opening two chapters, however, the outlines of a non-technical argument gradually become clear, and in the latter half of the book this argument, which is broadly humanistic, comes into its own.

Burnham opens with a survey of programmatic interpretations of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony—interpretations that take the idea of "narrative" as their point of departure. The earliest and probably most famous are the "Napoleon-oriented programs" of A. B. Marx and Alexandre Oulibicheff, both dating from the 1850s. In the works of these theorists, the figure of Napoleon is identified with the symphony's theme as it emerges in the first forty-five bars (bars which, as Burnham notes, "comprise one of the most raked-over pieces of musical property in the Western hemisphere"). Moments of tonal ambiguity, such as "the much-discussed C# in bar 7," are there to make the hero stronger. As Burnham puts it, "elements that impede the forward progress of the music or undermine its tonality are seen as external to the hero Napoleon and do not signify any weakness or vacillation on the part of the great general."

The most striking feature of Beethoven criticism over the past two centuries, Burnham argues, is its continuity. Later critics such as Paul Bekker, Arnold Schering, and Romain Rolland all hear the opening of the *Eroica* "in the same way" as Marx and Oulibicheff but construe it psychologically. Alfred Heuss "places the vicissitudes of the opening bars within the mind and character of the hero." The most forbiddingly abstract, or abstract-seeming critics, such as Heinrich Schenker, do not quite transcend the terms laid down by the allegedly naive programmatic critics. Schenker placed his own method of tonal analysis in stark op-

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position to those he saw as blathering about Napoleon and psychology, but "the sense of a dramatic scenario" manages to infiltrate Schenker's account of the tension between the audible "surface" of a Beethoven piece and the quasi-Platonic idea that, as Schenker saw it, is "coterminous with the whole work."

The heroic style emerges from, and in many ways is the fulfilment of, the classical style. The latter, exemplified by the works of Haydn and Mozart, is associated by Burnham with a series of discrete musical elements that at their most impressive maintain a high degree of fluidity while also being governed by a set of conventions. It may well be the case that Beethoven's own music answers to this description, but it is equally the case that no analyst of stature has ever heard it as a sequence of well-ordered elements—that is, as unproblematically "classical." They have heard it, rightly or wrongly, as characterized by an "inner entelechy," a mode of necessity that runs deeper than convention. The obvious comparison is to the way critics of the last century began at some point to read (or misread, as it is possible to argue) Shakespeare, who is mentioned several times by Burnham. The same faith in an obscure entelechy begins (in the criticism of Coleridge and Hazlitt, for example) to attach not just to Shakespeare but to poetry in general. Burnham is describing a tendency to depart from something shared and accessible—the audible surface of a piece of music—to something ghostly and hermetic. The analogous literary development would be to read, say, *Hamlet* as pivoting on the obscure fate of a single character rather than as a sequence of discrete events governed by a plot.

In a fascinating chapter titled "Institutional Values: Beethoven and the Theorists," Burnham surveys the work of four influential theorists—A. B. Marx, Hugo Riemann, Heinrich Schenker, and Rudolph Reti—and finds them all in thrall to "Beethovenian prepossessions," above all the prepossession in favor of music as the vehicle of an inexorable "process." Easily the most compelling figure among them is Schenker, whose method of analyzing pieces of music betrays something like a religious orientation. Schenker insists that what we encounter in a work such as the Fifth Symphony or the *Waldstein* Sonata is a series of "diminutions of basic contrapuntal motions." Translated into English, this means that Beethoven begins, quite unconsciously, with a musical seed or "prototype" that perishes, or diminishes, in the way an acorn can poetically be thought to "diminish" to an oak. We are in the shadowy precincts of German Idealism, where Schenker's word for this prototype, *Ursatz*, "is clearly meant to resonate with Goethe's *Urpflanz*." The emphasis goes off the musical work as a sequence of notes heard over a period of time and falls on the work as essentially "spatial," a series of contrapuntal layers radiating from the abstract prototype.

What Burnham would like to demonstrate is not the correctness or even cogency of this analysis but "the circular relationship that obtains between Beethoven and the theorists: it is never clear whether the theory is made to fit the music or the music is heard to fit the theory, and it is ultimately beside the point to attempt such a determination." The point, which emerges stealthily in the last two chapters, is that the largely Beethoven-inspired image of music as the vehicle of a remorseless organic process is perhaps inadequate to account for the full range of our musical experience. Perhaps there is something more user friendly (even, heaven forfend, autobiographical) in our dealngs with pieces of music. If we claim otherwise we may simply be pretentious, though it may also have to do with "post-Beethovenian tonal theory" which, like the New Criticism in literature, views the musical work as set apart from life by an austere "inner entelechy."

Burnham is attempting to do for music theory what M. H. Abrams did for literary theory in his 1953 book *The Mirror and the Lamp*: to show how the critical consciousness of a given time is invariably shaped by some powerful metaphor. The problem with metaphors, such as "organic form," is that they tend to be mistaken for straightforward descriptions of how artists work (though in his positing of "layers" as the constituent elements of a musical work, Schenker has made a real contribution to our understanding of music, as Edward Rothstein persuasively argues in his recent book *Emblems of Mind*). There is no way to prove that Beethoven was guided in his compositional habits by a sense of organic form, but it is possible to show, as Burnham very cleverly does, how critics virtually unanimously foisted the idea on him, as their literary brethren did in the case of Shakespeare.

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There are sociological reasons for the displacement of one critical metaphor by another, and Burnham attempts to specify some of them in a chapter on the heroic style as a component of the *Goethezeit*, or Age of Goethe, which upheld "an ennobling and all-embracing concept of self." If this chapter is less satisfactory than the others, it is only because literary and other studies have surrounded the "concept of self" with a cloud of boredom so thick that not even Beethoven can penetrate it.

Despite the academic nature of this study, its author has a Johnsonian sense of solidarity with what might be called the Common Listener, who is likely to hear the Fifth Symphony less as an example of "organic coherence" than as something that, once it is over, one wants to hear again and again. Beethoven is, as Burnham opens his book by acknowledging, "the single most influential composer of the Western world," and his name is synonymous with the heroic style. *Beethoven Hero* is a sustained act of homage to this style and the mode of theorizing that it appears to have helped engender. By the end of the book it is possible to accept, or at least respect, Scott Burnham's contention that the style is a cultural construct that hardly exhausts the nature of music or of Beethoven himself.

The Half-full Glass

CONDITIONS OF LIBERTY: CIVIL SOCIETY AND ITS RIVALS. *By Ernest Gellner. Allen Lane. $27.95. Viking Penguin. Paper, $12.95.*

CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY. *By Alain Touraine. Basil Blackwell. $54.95. Paper, $21.95.*

Reviewed by JEROME BRAUN

Ernest Gellner, who passed away on November 5, 1995, was a social philosopher and social anthropologist and a student of the social evolution that culminated in what is now called modernity. He wrote much on the constructs of the modern world, be they nationalism or psychoanalysis, knowing well the world that preceded them, though with skepticism for the claims of those students of postmodernity who claim to know what is coming after. He will be sorely missed, if for nothing other than a methodological rigor that clearly distinguished between social knowledge and social criticism. Ernest Gellner, among his other accomplishments, was a scholar of liberty.

Like the fabled glass that can be interpreted as being half empty or half full, Ernest Gellner in *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals* and Alain Touraine in *Critique of Modernity* interpret the rise of modern society from overall optimistic and pessimistic perspectives, respectively, though not without a good deal of overlap, especially regarding the weaknesses of modern society that are obvious to both men.

Ernest Gellner, whose last position was Director of the Institute for Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict Research at the Central European University in Prague, sought to bring Western thought to the dour authoritarianism of Eastern Europe. In other of his books—*Muslim Society* and *Encounters with Nationalism*—he described the increasing scope of the ruling structures of society, with the increasing weakening of folk societies by the high cultures in their respective culture areas. Of course one can debate how noble the adherents of these high cultures are and whether they are getting more virtuous or less. In *Muslim Society* he recounts the old story, originally told by Ibn Khaldun, of the continuing conflict between the inhabitants of the historical pastoral areas, with their vigor and protection of their own rights, and the governmental bureaucracy, with its depredations, emanating from the cities. Of course, over time some succumbed to the temptations of a rather wealthy and spoiled existence in the cities, an existence parasitic on the wealth produced in the countryside. (Or so the others left behind, with their dislike for social complexities and intermediaries that they nevertheless needed, thought.) A similar historical cycle was recounted by Aristotle and, in Roman times, by Polybius: the evolution from monarchy to tyranny to aristocracy to democracy to aristocracy and back again.

In fact, fundamentalist Islam, as a kind of

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purified high culture, has its appeal largely because the central government is now so important economically and as a provider of jobs. Therefore the temptations of particularism, producing societies based on connections and patronage, which are natural in all societies, and especially these, have more disruptive effects than before, not least because the subgroups of society no longer have the same horizontal ties to one another. That which increases the power of all government, and which once increased the power of monarchy, now increases the power of elected government, which nevertheless is still often not widely trusted.

If the economies in these societies were more dynamic, perhaps the powers of central government would not be so hungered after. Ernest Gellner's book on nationalism recounts how the economic dynamism of Western Europe has defused the tensions surrounding the powers of central government that were used by elites to reinforce their hold on high culture. The traditional economic backwardness of Central and Eastern Europe has often produced a remnant of respect for peasant culture, as described in the German traditions of populist romanticism, and a new kind of high culture, the culture of nationalism. There is a continuing conflict between elites who are trying to preserve ancient hierarchies and relationships and elites who are more purely economically oriented. Communism, oddly enough, was a Westernizing influence in Russian history, though influenced by older traditions of nationalism and status hierarchy.

All these themes are repeated in Gellner's book on civil society. He is on the side of the Anglo-American and French versions of progress, where non-governmental institutions are strong enough to counterbalance the state, and vice versa. He was opposed to the visions of Eastern European nationalisms. This "negative" liberty that Gellner favored, made famous in the writings of Isaiah Berlin, is the liberty of not being controlled. It still leaves open the question of "positive" liberty, which is the liberty of doing what one wants, if one can figure out what one wants—that is, the liberty produced by one's identity.

How does the liberty fostered by economic growth conflict with the liberty of personal identity, the liberty of a meaningful life? This is the question faced by all modernizing societies in the twentieth century. Individualism and nationalism are both the offspring of modernity, of the downfall in recent times of traditional hierarchy and its replacement by entrepreneurialism or bureaucratization.

Professor Gellner has misgivings about such nationalism. He thinks modern liberty, of the kind historically found in Anglo-American societies, works in a pragmatic sense, that modern pluralism differs from the pluralism of segmentary societies (ancient or tribal), which would be considered stifling by modern people—cousin-ridden, ritual-ridden, and often priest-ridden. Gellner has praise for a society made up of coordinating but separate institutions and associations strong enough to prevent tyranny but which individuals can enter and leave freely; the institutions and associations, in a sense, are connected horizontally rather than vertically, much like tribal societies are, and so are forced to negotiate with one another because there is no overarching authority. Yet tribal societies often choose to live under a monarch, if only to have someone to arbitrate their disputes. The same need to have it all, to have both local communal feeling and overall social order, is also present in modern societies. For Gellner the historical movement to achieve this is marked by the transition from societies based on status to societies based on contract, though his analysis is much more sophisticated and ironical than that of his precursors in the nineteenth century.

Gellner's book is a meditation on the vicissitudes of "negative" liberty, disposing of the pretensions of its competitors with an acerbic wit. It is popularly written and describes social structures and social roles within both cross-cultural and historical perspectives. Chapter titles such as "A Contrast between the Abrahamic Faiths" and "Ideological Pluralism and Liberal Doublethink, in the End of the Enlightenment Illusion" give a good notion of its tone. Still, by not being intellectual history, Gellner's book lacks a sharp critical edge compared to Touraine's book, for the former respects evolutionary change and does not "rage against the night." Not that Gellner is naïve. He approvingly quotes Ibn Khaldun's definition of the state: "the institution which prevents injustice other than such as it commits itself." As to why, for example, Islamic societies are not good at creating social structures

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through agglomeration—though the economic explanation of lack of financial independence is somewhat stressed—the ultimate explanation is that it is so because it has always been so.

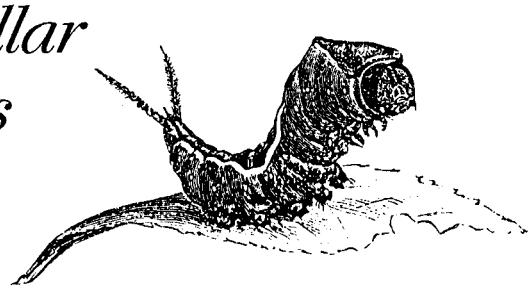
Alain Touraine, the Director of the Centre d'Analyse et d'Intervention Sociologiques in Paris, is also concerned with freedom, not so much freedom against the state, but the freedom to do whatever one wants, a kind of existential freedom. He probably believes that Ernest Gellner underestimated the degree to which inefficient or unjust institutions have power over us, though even Gellner in his book recognizes that his ideal is often far from a complete reality. Touraine's book is a meditation on the vicissitudes of "positive" liberty.

Touraine seems to long for an identity and tries to give it, as intellectuals are wont to do, through a kind of meditation on modes of consciousness, not through reproducing them, but through commentary on them. Just as religious commentary on scripture rarely produces a religious experience but is considered the next best thing, Professor Touraine's commentaries seem to be a secular version of this primeval need. If he can't produce a leftist substitute for religion, he can at least comment on it.

Ernest Gellner was raised in Czechoslovakia, spent many years in Great Britain, and finally returned to the Czech Republic. He admired the tendencies of Anglo-American intellectual culture and scorned the idle utopianism and impractical crabbiness posing as social critique of so much Continental European political philosophy. Alain Touraine, like so many French intellectuals of his generation, takes for granted the accomplishments and failures of the French Revolution and thinks it is not enough. In a sense, they are pushing the envelope of free speech to the limit, producing not so much social solidarity as, in many ways, social hatreds, the solidarities of extreme factionalism—things that since the 1960s have been a predilection in American social science as well. His book, rich in historical and philosophical allusions, shows a great dialogue with the great thinkers of the past, whom he respects, but less concern for the opinions of fellow Frenchmen of the present, whom he ignores for the most part.

The Blue Caterpillar and Other Essays

Sam Pickering



From *"The Blue Caterpillar"*:
"Sixty-seven girls and one adult danced in *Alice*. Eliza was the Queen of Hearts, and I was the Blue Caterpillar. I was excited. Never had I been in a ballet. Fifty-two years is a long time to be a chrysalis, and I was eager to split the pupal shell, pump up my wings, and flutter through an auditorium."

"Each of these pieces begins with a small, highly personal observation, and from there Pickering (often quite literally) 'takes a walk' . . . exploring the natural world, the world of family and friends, and—most vividly—the world of ideas. Always, of course, that Pickering voice is at the center . . . witty, self-deprecating, funny, clear-eyed, no nonsense, and distinctly his."—Jay Parini, Middlebury College

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To a large extent, the leftist critique of the 1960s, so prominent a part of Touraine's work, remains. But is the rest of society really made up of puppets? He has become too shrewd or perhaps just too cynical—again, like many French intellectuals of his generation and even more so of the one that came afterward—to rely anymore on mere denunciations of modern institutions. Thus the critique of liberalism is once again in vogue in French political thought, and as part of this tradition of critique, which is swallowing up even the leftist critique of the previous generation, Touraine places great emphasis on comparisons and contrasts of various other people's critiques of modern society, particularly Nietzsche and Freud, and prefers to draw out common threads.

The changes in society that Touraine writes about are important, but they are described from the point of view of outside observers, not from the point of view of the people being affected, so that the practical side of these questions, the options that people have, is not explored. Nevertheless, the issues he does explore—the decay of modernity, the destruction of the ego, the nature of modern consumerism—are of critical importance. There is no question that this book succeeds as intellectual history and, secondarily, as a description of social processes.

Touraine is correct about the decay of our private life, just as Gellner is correct about politics without a sense of civil society being impossible, for that is the source of social cooperation and compromise. Touraine is correct that science rather than God is the central legitimating construct of modern society. As the search for truth, science has become the handmaiden of technology and of the economic system that is tied in with it, and not the other way around, which would not be the case if science still had its ancient connection to morality and religion. Autonomy of individuals and autonomy of institutions have become defining characteristics of modern society, and this autonomy tends to minimize coordination of various social functions.

More than anything else, Touraine documents the disillusionment that characterizes the modern world, in a sense putting the concerns of French existentialism on a more sociological footing. The unity of the transcendental and the social as expressed in custom and community—that is, in religion—had been greatly weakened in the eighteenth-century Age of Reason. It has been a sobering experience to realize that the issues of happiness or sadness must be introduced into nature, since nature will not answer such questions directly—or, more accurately, nature is about both happiness and sadness, life and death. The dilemma of freedom stressed by earlier French existentialists is carried on by Touraine in his sociological discourses; and, like them, he sometimes clears a path, and sometimes, like the rest of us, he seems to be caught in a maze.

"Freedom for what?" has always been the question the existentialists failed to answer, for freedom for them often seemed to substitute for human nature and morality, freedom acting as a pure, distilled essence of human nature removed from all contingency, and therefore from all meaningful context in which it can function. As a sociologist, Touraine struggles to provide that context, and, I should add, perhaps in a more unconscious way, so does Ernest Gellner.

Does Touraine succeed? I think he does, partly. Touraine's book is a meditation on how social utility—on what is useful to society—has become the source of all values, and how this falters because of contradictions in social interests. Social differentiation, like all the king's men, can't easily put all the pieces of social integration back together again. For those interested in the sociology and psychology of disillusionment, Touraine offers much to think about. Gellner, with his emphasis on progress defined as political freedom, thinks we should make the attempt. For those who wish to concentrate on certain "practical" issues, to get beyond intellectual history and learn from political history why intellectual elites can often be so self-serving, or to find an explanation for the failure in Eastern Europe of communism, Gellner's book has much to offer. Touraine and Gellner do not really contradict each other; they just look at modernity as being, respectively, half empty and half full.

It is a pity that the debate between Ernest Gellner, the defender of Anglo-American traditions of liberty and of that procedural justice which falls under the name of limited government, and Alain Touraine and the propounders of Continental European thought who proposed a search for substantive justice

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without proposing procedures for finding it, has ended so soon. Though both sides in this debate pointed out important lessons, the loss of Gellner may be more important for one significant reason. He could write of intellectual history without himself succumbing to the arrogance of being an intellectual. He had that small bond with the common people in which he showed that he was satisfied at being their observer, not their teacher. In doing so he became, not without that touch of urbane irony so common in his own writings, not so bad a teacher himself, practicing, for all his fertile output, a kind of British understatement to the end. Of course, if Alain Touraine is right, ours may not be such a great time for being so laid-back. Still, with Gellner's faith in virtue freely chosen, and with Touraine's faith in freedom for individual and collective creativity, these two thinkers may not be so far apart after all.

Keeper of the Flame

OTTO KLEMPERER: HIS LIFE AND TIMES. Volume 1, 1885–1933 (1983). Volume 2, 1933–1973 (1996). *By Peter Heyworth. Cambridge University Press. $39.95 each or $75 the set.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH HOROWITZ

I cannot think of a single living classical musician whose biography could be subtitled "His Life and Times." (Imagine: Luciano Pavarotti? Itzhak Perlman? James Levine?) But "Otto Klemperer: His Life and Times" sounds right A physical giant, a wild yet austere personality, Klemperer occupied a vast stage. Purposefully and fortuitously, heroically and clumsily, he tangled with political and intellectual affairs far beyond the scope of mere music in performance.

As director of Berlin's Kroll Opera from 1917 to 1931, Klemperer personified Weimar culture—new music, new aesthetics, new thought. His fitful American career, in Hitler's wake, exposed both his Goliath-like psychological instability and the philistinism of certain American musical and political mores. His reputation was ultimately regenerated in London, where he acquired a cult status inimical to the manic-depressive tumult of his five previous decades in music.

We learn from the late Peter Heyworth's biography that Klemperer himself regarded his musical directorship in Wiesbaden—where he presided over innovative stagings of Busoni, Ravel, Strauss, and Stravinsky between 1924 and 1927—as the happiest period of his life. Heyworth plausibly regards the subsequent Kroll years as Klemperer's most fulfilled. Established by the Prussian Ministry of Culture as a progressive branch of the Berlin Staatsoper, the Staatsoper an Platz de Republik occupied the renovated Kroll Theater as part of an agreement that reserved half the seats for the Social Democratic Volksbühne at prices geared to the wages of a twenty-five-year-old manual worker.

Klemperer was consumed by a reformist mission: to present recent operas of quality; to challenge the "star system"; to replace naturalistic stagings with the scenic creations of such artists as László Moholy-Nagy and Oskar Schlemmer; to achieve a new unity of music and drama. He championed Hindemith, Weill, Janácek, and—above all—Stravinsky. At the same time, the latest Schoenberg and Berg, even Weill's *Der Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, were not for him. In fact, Klemperer's penchant for neoclassicism made him an important advocate for a new kind of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, purged of Romantic nuance and rubato.

If Klemperer's interpretive austerities resonated powerfully with the *neue Sachlichkeit* (new objectivity) of the Bauhaus, his temperament was an Expressionistic cauldron. Here is Lotte Lehmann on rehearsing *Lohengrin* in Hamburg in 1912, when Klemperer was twenty-seven: "Klemperer sat at the piano like an evil spirit, thumping on it with long hands like a tiger's claws, and dragging my terrified voice into the vortex of his fanatical will. Elsa's dreamy serenity became a rapturous ecstasy, her timorous pleading, a challenging demand."

In certain respects, Klemperer resembled Gustav Mahler, whom he assisted as a youth, and whose memory and example he revered.

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Mahler, too, was an inferno who, as director of the Vienna Staatsoper (like Klemperer at the Kroll), dominated and unified every aspect of repertoire, production, and performance. Like Klemperer at the Kroll, Mahler overturned canons of verisimilitude. And Klemperer followed Mahler the conductor in passionately demanding a dispassionate clarity of texture.

Mahler's signature achievements in Vienna included revisionist stagings of *Fidelio* and *Tristan und Isolde*, both designed by Alfred Roller. Klemperer's signature achievements at the Kroll included a famous 1929 *Flying Dutchman*, designed by Ewald Dülberg and purged of what Klemperer's friend Ernst Bloch memorably termed "Traumkitsch." Klemperer restored the opera's 1843 Dresden version, in which the overture and finale had yet to acquire the shimmering "redemption" theme. As Wagner's original instrumentation eschewed the harp he added in 1860, the stark, stylized Kroll staging was stripped of naturalistic detail. The *Allgemeine Muzikzeitung* reported:

> The Dutchman, naturally beardless, looks like a Bolshevist agitator, Senta like a fanatical Communist harridan, Erik . . . a pimp. Daland's crew resemble port vagabonds of recent times, the wretched spinning chamber a workshop in a woman's prison. . . . What Klemperer and his helpmates offer . . . amounts to a total destruction of Wagner's work, a basic falsification of his creative intentions. That goes in almost equal degree for the musical performance, which coarsened the sound to an intolerable extent. . . . Tempi were ridiculously overdriven, finer dynamic shadings eliminated and all expression reduced to a minimum. . . . The way the State Opera in the Tiergarten functions is damaging to Berlin's reputation as a cultural center. Either its methods must be changed . . . or it must be shut.

Klemperer marched into the office of another Berlin paper and threatened to attack its music critic.

The Kroll *Flying Dutchman* left a permanent imprint. Of the Kroll years generally, the eminent musicologist Alfred Einstein later wrote: "For the first time on such a scale a German opera house had basically turned its back on museum-like attitudes and set out in quest of living art." But economic and political pressures were fierce. On the right, the Kroll was denounced as anti-German and anti-Christian. Klemperer, born a Jew, was said to perpetrate "Jewish pessimism" and "Jewish negroid" decadence. And the idealism of opera for the people proved deluded: far from supporting Klemperer, the Volksbühne wanted *Aida* and *Carmen*. Thomas Mann summarized why the Kroll was closed: "Because [it] occupies a strong position on the intellectual left, because it stands at the crossroads of social and cultural interests and is a thorn in the eye of . . . obscurantism. If opera today is still or has once again become an intellectual issue and a subject of intellectual discussion, that is in the first place the merit of this institution."

The Kroll years dominate volume 1 of Heyworth's biography. Volume 2 concentrates on Klemperer's mainly hapless American years, and his Indian summer in London after 1954. Klemperer moved his family to southern California in 1935. Two years before, he had become music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic—not a post he coveted, but a foothold in American musical life. "My task here is that of a pioneer . . . ," he wrote to a friend. "But the people are endlessly grateful and really love me. . . . About the life (and everything that goes with it) I still often have doubts."

The manager of the Los Angeles orchestra was the stout and exuberant Mrs. Leland Atherton Irish. She was devoted to Klemperer; he regarded her, Heyworth tells us, "as a vulgar busybody." She once urged Klemperer to omit the mournful finale of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony. On another occasion she insisted that the pianist Eduard Steuermann be photographed in a chef's apron and hat. One of Klemperer's duties was the annual Easter Sunrise Service at Forest Lawn Memorial Park, at which he had to conduct excerpts from *Parsifal* and *Die Meistersinger* for an audience of thirty thousand at daybreak. His important Los Angeles performances included the premiere of Schoenberg's transcription of Brahms's G Minor Piano Quartet—a memorable symphonization (it was later brilliantly choreographed by Balanchine) suggested to Schoenberg by Klemperer himself. Among the orchestra's guest conductors were Stravinsky and Hindemith.

Musically, Los Angeles was a backwater; Klemperer sought a beachhead in New York or Philadelphia. But he was too much a prod-

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uct of Weimar Germany. American symphonic culture was in thrall to the celebrity conductors Toscanini, Stokowski, and Koussevitzky, and to their glamorous and virtuosic orchestras. The leading music critics were out of sympathy with modernism, with *neue Sachlichkeit*, with Stravinsky and Schoenberg. The leading classical music businessman was Arthur Judson, who ran both the New York Philharmonic and Columbia Concerts (later Columbia Artists Management). Judson was well aware of Klemperer. And he recognized that he needed a conductor to counterbalance Toscanini's conservative New York repertoire. Klemperer was engaged by Judson to conduct the first fourteen weeks of the Philharmonic's 1935–36 season. He insisted on programming Mahler's Second Symphony. Judson said no. Klemperer won a Pyrrhic victory: he led the symphony with notable success, but Judson abandoned him. When Stokowski resigned in Philadelphia in 1936, he was succeeded by Eugene Ormandy. When Toscanini resigned later the same year, John Barbirolli and Artur Rodzinski were initially his chief replacements. Ormandy, Barbirolli, and Rodzinski were not in Klemperer's league. Klemperer wrote to Judson:

> You made it clear to me in different letters, that you wished to establish for me a permanent situation in New York, that the last season should be considered only as a through-way. . . . Because I was convinced that the situation would become for me a permanent one as musical direktor *[sic]*, that the society did not reengage me is the strongest *offence*, the sharpest *insult* to me as artist, which I can imagine. You see, I am no youngster. I have a name and a good name. One could not *use* me in a most difficult season and then expell me. This non-reengagement will have its very bad results not only for me in New York but in the *whole world*. . . . This non-reengagement is an absolutely unjustified wrong done to me by the Philharmonic Society.

"Klemperer," Heyworth comments, "usually confronted setbacks with stoical resignation: such an outburst of rage and resentment remained unique in his career."

In 1939, a huge tumor was discovered in Klemperer's brain. Its removal left the right side of his face and body partly paralyzed. Though the tumor was non-malignant, and his mental capacity reportedly not impaired, a period of extreme psychological disturbance ensued. Klemperer left his Los Angeles post. In New York, he took to hiring taxis (for which he could not pay) for entire nights. His clothes were dirty, he ate irregularly, he walked unsteadily and with a stick. He wore an eye patch. He packed a water pistol. His mood careened from hilarity to rage. In 1941, he agreed to enter what he did not realize was a mental institution in Rye, New York. He confronted the medical director, Dr. Daniel J. Kelly, with such anger that Kelly reluctantly allowed him to leave—and thereupon informed the police, who issued an eight-state warning that Klemperer was "dangerous and insane." The *New York Times* ran a front-page story about the incident. The soprano Elisabeth Schumann, who knew Klemperer intimately, wrote to a friend: "I don't find him much madder than he was before, admittedly more uninhibited, more exalted—though as far as music is concerned: wonderful . . . but . . . no one wants him."

Eventually, Klemperer turned up in Budapest, where from 1947 to 1950 he resumed the important operatic career he had abandoned in Germany in 1933. "I feel well in Budapest,"

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he told a reporter. "I feel as though I am part of it." But Klemperer remained an American citizen, and the State Department and FBI had begun taking notice of his leftist sympathies. In the Hungarian press, he was quoted criticizing American commercialism and "war hysteria." By the time the United States refused to renew his passport, in 1952, Hungary was in the throes of a cultural crackdown and the Klemperers had rented an apartment in Montreal. They were now compelled to return to New York, where Klemperer had to forego important European engagements.

American union policies prevented Klemperer from recording in Europe so long as he remained an American citizen. A concert and recording contract with London's Philharmonia Orchestra came to the rescue in 1954. A German passport was quickly arranged. Almost as quickly, Klemperer's 1955 recordings of three Beethoven symphonies, with the Philharmonia, more than consolidated his reputation in Western Europe. With Toscanini's retirement and the death of Wilhelm Furtwängler, Otto Klemperer, once a wild man, re-emerged a keeper of the flame. During this long final phase of his career, lasting until his retirement in 1972 at the age of eighty-seven, Klemperer rarely ventured into the opera house. He abandoned his advocacy of Stravinsky, Hindemith, and other modernists. And he amassed a legacy of recordings—hundreds of them—perhaps unsurpassed by any other conductor.

This amazing life story is painstakingly told by Heyworth. The heroism of it all registers as plainly and objectively as *neue Sachlichkeit* itself. But much is missing. Klemperer's affect, whatever his aesthetic, was epic. In later life, his extreme age, crippled face, dour intellect, and great height complicated the effect of his intended simplicity. Heyworth tells us little about Klemperer's actual performances. His famous slow tempos are not a feature of his interwar recordings, or of the Budapest Opera performances recorded live by Hungaroton. A more salient, more consistent trait of his conducting was dogged resistance to the vagaries of Romantic *Innigkeit*, to the subjective probes so special to his antipode Furtwängler. Klemperer's most characteristic performances, rigorously projecting outward design, amassed a magisterial poise and weight.

Klemperer's career of seven decades suggests a final point of reference. Like Toscanini's, Klemperer's signature "objectivity" ironically contradicted an overpowering personal imprint. Like Toscanini, transplanted from Milan to New York, Klemperer found his greatest fame in old age on foreign soil. Like Toscanini, again, he most completely fulfilled his artistic potential conducting opera (including contemporary opera) in his own cultural heartland long before achieving international celebrity as a revered apostle of Beethoven and other old masters.

Tender of the Flame

THE SACRED FIRE OF LIBERTY: JAMES MADISON AND THE FOUNDING OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. *By Lance Banning. Cornell University Press. $35.*

Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER FLANNERY

In 1790, Thomas Jefferson called James Madison "the greatest man in the world." In the 1990s, academic historians generally frown on such talk. They insist that because there is always disagreement about what is great and what is petty, we must acknowledge that there is no rational foundation for the distinction. Jefferson is closer to the truth.

James Madison's greatness was different from that of Washington or Lincoln. He did not display their moral grandeur. His greatness was best displayed in the sustained, penetrating, architectonic thought that earned him the epithet "Father of the Constitution." Lance Banning is alive to the greatness of Madison. In *The Sacred Fire of Liberty* he attempts to recover the essence of Madison's architectonic thought, what he calls his "founding vision."

It is important to do this because it is "Madison on whom we unavoidably depend to comprehend [the American experiment's] intellectual foundations." If we have misunderstood Madison's founding thoughts and actions, "we have misunderstood the Founding." To understand Madison and the American founding, Banning undertakes a "developmental" study. He tries to trace the "evolution" of

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Madison's vision in the act of his founding thoughts and deeds.

Banning's book must be a work of recovery because, he argues, we have indeed misunderstood Madison—gravely misunderstood him in many fundamental ways. Between us and Madison's constitutional statesmanship lies a great heap of modern scholarly misinterpretation. Banning's book is a sustained effort to correct the many grievous errors, promulgated over most of this century, in what have become the prevailing views of the nature of Madison's founding vision and therefore of the founding itself. These fundamental errors have been committed by the most eminent scholars of the American founding. Charles Beard's prestigious errors have been corrected for decades and need (and receive) no special attention from Banning, though their influence has proven remarkably durable even among the most learned students of these matters. Banning singles out for explicit correction Irving Brant, Madison's great biographer; Martin Diamond, who did so much to revive the serious reading of the *Federalist*; and Gordon Wood, whose work has established the leading historical paradigm for founding studies for the past thirty years. Banning holds each of these great scholars responsible for fundamental misinterpretations of Madison's thoughts and deeds. There are, he contends, grave flaws "in most analyses of Madison's position at the Founding." These errors of interpretation are a constant theme in Banning's book, not only in his endnotes but interwoven in the text from beginning to end. It is from this mountain of errors, as much as from the mere mists of time, that Madison's founding vision must be "recovered."

Two tendencies of modern scholarship seem to be the cause of most misunderstandings of Madison's founding statesmanship: a "fixation" on and chronic misinterpretation of *Federalist* 10 and "a nearly universal disregard of the confederal dimensions of his thinking." Almost equally misleading is the idea, made popular by Gordon Wood ("the leading modern student of the new American republic"), that "Madison repudiated early revolutionary thought and moved America decisively toward modern, liberal assumptions." These errors are related to one another and to other standard misreadings of Madison. They are connected, for example, with an exaggeration of Madison's nationalism in the 1780s; a misinterpretation of Madison's purposes and actions at the Constitutional Convention; and an inability adequately to explain Madison's role as opposition leader in the 1790s.

Banning's "developmental" study of the thought of the Father of the Constitution may be unsettling to those seeking a firm foundation for constitutional interpretation. But he does not mean to lead his readers on a futile search for a founding vision that is always changing, never complete. Although he treats Madison's most famous writings in the *Federalist* as merely "a snapshot of his changing vision, not a thorough, full, or finished exposition of his views," he does suggest that Madison's vision ripened to fullness and that it is accessible to us. According to Banning, Madison's constitutional understanding reached its essential fullness by 1793.

This may seem inconveniently late for a citizen wanting to trace constitutional arguments to the intentions of the Father as he framed and ratified the supreme law of the land in 1787–88. As a historian, Banning is content to acknowledge that Madison and the others

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who framed the Constitution "did not know from the beginning quite what it implied." However, in the course of writing a series of essays for the *National Gazette*, in 1791–92, Madison's founding vision solidified. These essays mark "another major landmark in the evolution of his thought." As Banning writes: "Not, indeed, until the contributions to *The Federalist* and to the *National Gazette* are seen as parts of one evolving corpus—not until the sets of essays have been read together, each within its context and as each explains the other—can we grasp Madison's vision as a whole." This is the next necessary step in understanding Madison's statesmanship, and thus the American founding—a step Banning refrains from taking in this book; he recommends the recent work in this area by Colleen Sheehan.

Banning insists that it is time again to emphasize the differences between Hamilton and Madison—to remind ourselves once more of the split personality of Publius. For all they held in common—and there was a great deal—important differences between these two founders were there (largely unspoken) from the beginning in the early 1780s, continued through their collaboration on the *Federalist*, and finally were brought roaring to the surface by changing circumstances in the early 1790s. One of the great mistakes of modern scholarship has been the failure to distinguish Madison from Hamilton in the right ways and to the right degree.

In reviving this old and not merely academic question—in drawing out the distinctions between Madison and Hamilton—Banning insists that his "object is to understand the founders, not to judge them." He does not, he writes, "side with one against the other." But Banning succeeds in judging Madison impartially perhaps as well as Madison succeeded in finding a "dispassionate umpire" to arbitrate the fundamental political disputes within the federal republic. Banning's scrupulous and fair-minded scholarship does not prevent Madison from appearing as the hero that he is. He is not, perhaps, as generously impartial to Hamilton.

Banning takes trouble, for example, to correct the "error" promoted by misreadings of *Federalist* 10, "that Madison held a Hobbesian view of human nature." In another passage, he goes out of his way to describe Hamilton as "a Hobbesian or Machiavellian in his conception of the world." He admits that certain passages of *Federalist* 10 "may readily suggest" that Madison was a Hobbesian, and certainly the same may be said of some of Hamilton's passages. But he rightly advises the reader to look at the whole of Madison's thoughts and deeds to discover his true understanding. Nowhere in Madison's writing, to my knowledge, is there as pointed and explicit a repudiation of Hobbes as the following, written by the young Hamilton:

> Moral obligation according to [Hobbes], is derived from the introduction of civil society; and there is no virtue, but what is purely artificial, the mere contrivance of politicians, for the maintenance of social intercourse. [But] Good and wise men, in all ages, have embraced a very dissimilar theory. They have supposed, that the deity . . . has constituted an eternal and immutable law, which is, indispensibly, obligatory upon all mankind, prior to any human institution whatever. . . . This is what is called the law of nature. . . . Upon this law depend the natural rights of mankind. . . . The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam, in the whole *volume* of human nature, by the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by any mortal power.

Madisonian impartiality requires some notice of this powerful repudiation of Hobbes by one accused of—or credited with—being a Hobbesian.

In thus repudiating Hobbes, Hamilton was affirming the principles of the American Revolution: the laws of nature and of nature's God on which "depend the natural rights of mankind" to secure which governments are instituted among men. In this, Hamilton was in perfect harmony with Madison. Charting the "evolution" of Madison's founding vision, Banning insists that the fixed point of constancy in Madison's statesmanship was his unwavering devotion to the principles of the Revolution of 1776. "Revolutionary principles and a determination to preserve the revolutionary order linked all of Madison's ideas into a complex chain." However Madison's constitutional understanding "developed," whatever he learned in founding the American federal republic, he evolved *"without abandoning the Revolution."*

In Banning's view, it seems to be precisely

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his undying fidelity to the "fundamental maxims of the Revolution" that marks the most important distinction between Madison and other "nationalist" founders such as Hamilton. Other framers and founders might fairly be accused of "reactionary" designs against the Revolution of 1776, but Banning cannot emphasize too much that Madison is to be distinguished from these reactionaries. There was "no hint" of "such a counterrevolutionary attitude in Madison himself."

In this matter, Banning's "impartiality" deserves to succeed in rescuing Madison from the misrepresentations of modern scholars since Charles Beard. Banning's example, it may be hoped, will inspire studies of equally scrupulous impartiality to illuminate the revolutionary fidelity of other founders and of the founding itself.

The relation of the Constitution to the Revolution is a theme that leads naturally to the general question of the meaning of the Constitution itself. Banning cites Gordon Wood's view that "the Constitution . . . was intrinsically an aristocratic document designed to check the democratic tendencies of the period." Banning agrees with Wood that many supporters of the Constitution were anti-republican elitists with designs to remove power from the people and place it in the hands of a privileged few. James Madison, however, was emphatically not one of these. Madison "thought the Constitution perfectly consistent with republican philosophy." Banning notes: "The Constitution *he* defended . . . would *not* produce a government unresponsive to the people's needs or will." It was "a wholly democratic remedy for democratic ills." He makes a good case that Madison was true to his liberal-republican convictions in drafting and explaining and defending the Constitution. But what of the Constitution itself? Madison and Wood cannot both be right: The Constitution cannot be "intrinsically . . . aristocratic" in Wood's meaning and "perfectly consistent with republican philosophy" in Madison's.

What does the Constitution "intrinsically" mean, to use Gordon Wood's surprising term? The term is surprising coming from Gordon Wood, who is not ordinarily associated with such discourse. He is better known for his view that there is and can be no intrinsic meaning to the Constitution—that, in his words, "The Constitution means whatever we want it to mean." According to Wood, while it "may be a necessary fiction for lawyers and jurists to believe in a 'correct' or 'true' interpretation of the Constitution in order to carry on their business, . . . we historians have different obligations and aims." Here he expresses the prevailing view of the historical profession, heard often in recent discussions of the question of "original intent." There is no "intrinsic" Constitution; there is no "true interpretation" of the Constitution. As the historian and Madison scholar Jack Rakove has recently written: "historians have little at stake in ascertaining the original meaning" of the Constitution. Unlike lawyers and jurists, and presumably citizens and statesmen, who must have their "fictions" of the true meaning of the Constitution, historians can "revel in . . . the ambiguities of the evidentiary record."

James Madison did not think that the idea of a "true interpretation of the Constitution" was a "fiction." His greatest efforts and accomplishments as a statesman may be said to have been devoted to elucidating the true meaning of the Constitution. There is perhaps no greater gulf between Madison's understanding and the "prevailing views" of modern and contemporary scholarly authorities than that which separates them on this issue. As the leading participant in the Constitutional Convention, as co-author of the *Federalist,* and as defender of the Constitution in the Virginia ratifying convention, Madison had reflected upon the meaning of the Constitution more deeply and thoroughly than had perhaps any other American. When the Constitution became the supreme law of the land, Madison continued and—Banning tells us—even intensified his exegesis. During the first session of the first Congress under the new Constitution, Madison was compelled to conduct "a more minute examination of the [Constitution] than he had ever undertaken." The occasion was the question of proper procedures for removal of executive officials. In seeking to interpret the Constitution, Madison sought to expound what "the Constitution intended." He admitted the great difficulty of this task, even for one as intimately familiar with the framing and ratification of the Constitution as he. All he could do, he said, "is to weigh well everything advanced on both sides, with the purest desire to find out the true meaning of

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the Constitution and to be guided by that and an attachment to the true spirit of liberty."

This was just the beginning of a lifelong effort to establish and perpetuate the sovereign authority of the true understanding of the Constitution as the foundation of American political life. In this work Madison necessarily and self-consciously combined the role of historian with the role of founder and statesman. It could be said that he combined all these roles in the single role of the elusive "disinterested . . . umpire," attempting to arbitrate justly the most fundamental and divisive disputes about the terms of the American social compact.

Madison understood the Constitution to be a compact, consent to the terms of which bound the Americans together as one people. His understanding of this consent, which lay at the root of legitimate self-government, was part of a "complex chain" linking the American constitutional order firmly to the revolutionary principles of 1776. "The authority of constitutions over governments, and of the sovereignty of the people over constitutions," he wrote, "are truths which are at all times necessary to be kept in mind." To those truths that must at all times be kept in mind he would add the truth that the people themselves are bound by a superior authority. Though the majority may possess superior power, they have no right to impose—à la Gordon Wood—whatever "meaning" they prefer on the American compact. "There is no maxim in my opinion which is more liable to be misapplied and which therefore more often needs elucidation than the . . . one that the interest of the majority is the political standard of right and wrong."

In the great political crises that Madison lived through in his long life—many of which are beyond the scope of Banning's book—he never endorsed the view that the Constitution "means whatever we want it to mean," that whoever happened to hold power at a given moment had the authority to expound in a binding way the meaning of the Constitution. In Madison's view, free government is founded not on the arbitrary and tyrannical will of transient majorities but on moral principles informing any truly sovereign consent: "The sovereignty of the society as vested and exercisable by the majority, may do anything that could be *rightfully* done by the unanimous concurrence of the members; the reserved rights of individuals (of conscience for example) in becoming parties to the original compact being beyond the legitimate reach of sovereignty, wherever vested or however viewed."

These are pious self-delusions or cynical poses in the Gordon Wood view, a view that prevails among contemporary professional historians. From this point of view, it was a "necessary fiction" at best that Madison was engaged in producing as co-author of the *Federalist*, as champion of the Constitution in the Virginia ratifying convention, or for that matter during the crisis of 1798, the Missouri crisis, or the nullification crisis, when he devoted himself to teaching his countrymen what the truth was about their constitutional relations to one another. The most important issues in most of American political history appear, in the "prevailing view" of professional historians, to be pointless clashes between "necessary fictions" led by combatants who are hopelessly deluded or cynical: It is all sound and fury, signifying nothing. The historians' "obligation," apparently, is to point this out, so that their grateful fellow citizens can revel with them in the ambiguity. One wonders where this obligation comes from and is grateful that Lance Banning has in some measure risen above it. There is nothing cynical and very little that is self-deluded in his James Madison. Madison was a faithful tender of the Sacred Fire of Liberty.

Call for Information

I would be grateful to hear from anyone who can share reminiscences, thoughts, letters, or photographs of my grandfather, the economic historian and scholar Alexander Gerschenkron, for a memoir/biography I am writing of him.

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The Reader Replies

The Kevorkian Epidemic

There are two issues to "The Kevorkian Epidemic" by Dr. Paul R. McHugh in the Winter 1997 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR that should be kept separate. The first is whether Dr. Kevorkian is mad or criminal. But a more important issue is whether people have the right to determine when they will die and whether a physician (or anyone else) has the right to assist them.

Professor McHugh is wrong on both these issues. I agree that many patients with fatal diseases are depressed and that their depression should be more assiduously sought and treated. But it is incorrect that depression is the *only* reason they want to die. My professional experience with terminally ill patients, which agrees with the *Lancet* study that McHugh cites, is that they *rarely* wish to die, whether by suicide or from their illness, despite sometimes enduring what a sane person might consider to be intolerable suffering. There are good and valid reasons other than depression for wishing to die, and when a patient with a terminal illness wants to do so, which as I say is surprisingly and thankfully rare, one should not dismiss their desires solely as a manifestation of depression. Suppose their depression is treated to the best of our current ability and they *still* wish to die. Is this wish now a manifestation of insanity? Professor McHugh would seem to say so. Isn't there a circularity to the argument that insanity disqualifies the wishes of a suicide but that the wish to die is, ipso facto, evidence of insanity? This catch 22 rules out the possibility that there is *ever* a valid wish to die. It's a point of view, I suppose, but one which is reminiscent of the former Soviet Union—if you opposed the State you were, by definition, insane and therefore belonged in the psychiatric penitentiary.

The case of Nelson Butters which Professor McHugh presents to support his argument for a "natural end" is inspiring, but supports the argument that McHugh opposes! For, at the end of his fatal illness, Dr. Butters signaled that he was ready to die. Was he pathologically depressed or insane in expressing this wish? I don't think so, and neither does McHugh seem to think so. Someone other than Dr. Butters pulled the ventilator plug. Was that person mad or a criminal in bringing about Dr. Butters's death? I don't think so, and neither does McHugh seem to think so. Would Professor McHugh then please explain why it was so admirable that Dr. Butters was able to have his wish to die obeyed when other patients with the identical disease and the identical prognosis should not be granted the same wish? Was it just a matter of timing? If so, very few patients can expect the exceptional support that Dr. Butters evidently had and knew he could count on to the end. They fear their capabilities will dwindle to the point where they no longer have the power to end an intolerable situation. The cozy description of Nelson "surrounded by devoted nurses . . . family . . . physicians . . . " and his "love of life" and "victory over death" do not convince me that others, the "sad victims" of Dr. Kevorkian, love life any the less for being less gifted and less fortunate than Dr. Butters. Nor do they deserve any less support from the medical profession when their end is inevitable and imminent.

The issue of Dr. Kevorkian himself is secondary. Professor McHugh seems to object to him mainly on grounds that he has an "overvalued idea" and is overly zealous. The term "overvalued idea" is clearly pejorative. Many revolutionary ideas which we now take for granted but that meet the criteria Professor McHugh gives started life as "overvalued"—universal suffrage, civil rights, feminism, even democracy, to name a few. The fact that stupid errors have been committed in their name does not detract from their merit. Did John Brown's craziness make the abolition of slavery itself an "overvalued idea"? This is simply an academic way of denigrating an idea one disagrees with. It is not always possible to be con-

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fident, except perhaps in hindsight, which ideas have merit and which are "overvalued." Calling Dr. Kevorkian a man with an "overvalued idea" seems to me to be Professor McHugh's only way to attribute an unworthy motive to Dr. Kevorkian. He may be zealous, perhaps even a little weird, but Dr. Kevorkian has raised an important issue and provoked needed debate at the risk of condemnation without personal gain. He deserves credit for this, not contumely.

NICHOLAS J. GROSS, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Stritch School of Medicine
Loyola University of Chicago

Professor Paul R. McHugh's article, "The Kevorkian Epidemic," dutifully parrots the medical establishment's official party line and berates Dr. Kevorkian for his participation in patient suicides.

Starting from the basic premise that no one really wants to die and that people would rather live, McHugh concludes that Kevorkian's practice of aiding afflicted persons to a peaceful death is wrong, that, instead, he should be providing medication so that suffering patients can be made pain-free and depression-free so they might then live out their "normal" life spans.

What McHugh apparently chooses not to see is that, while it is probably true that most grievously suffering, mobility constricted, or moribund persons would rather live than die, it is true only in the context of life as they knew it before their current afflictions. Many do not want to live, if, by "living" we merely imply absence of death, with no regard for the quality of such "life." The intellectually active person will hardly endorse an endless life-style of drug-induced, soporific, vegetative existence, the person of independent spirit will hardly countenance a lifetime of dependency and helplessness, nor will the person of profundity welcome the sacrifice of reality in favor of a spurious, unbalanced, anxiety-free existence induced by a regular consumption of happy pills. In fine, the integrated person demands a life of integrity. Anything less is viewed as counterfeit and demeaning.

All of which suggests that, McHugh to the contrary notwithstanding, what is at issue here is not a medical problem but a moral one, where the only logical arbiter is the person whose life is at hazard.

BEN TUTOLI
St. Petersburg, Florida

I am absolutely horrified that Professor McHugh wants to take away my freedom of choice to decide whether to end my life early under the pretext that I am suffering from depression. Of course, he will be the final arbiter with respect to my assumed depression.

I am 74 years old and a widower. In 1990, when it became legal in the State of New Jersey, I immediately executed a "Combined Advance Directive for Health Care." In it I specified that in a terminal condition, defined by a life expectancy of one year or less, or in case of an incurable and irreversible condition, all life-sustaining measures should be terminated. As examples of conditions which I find unacceptable I listed: coma, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, Parkinson's disease, Lou Gehrig's disease, stroke with mental or physical impairment.

I further specified that artificially provided fluids and nutrition such as by feeding tubes or intravenous infusion be withheld and that I be allowed to die.

I specified that I consider hand-feeding by others due to incapacity to feed myself to be artificially provided nutrition and that my life should not be prolonged by extended hand-feeding by others.

These decisions are based on the following considerations:

1) What little wealth I have accumulated should go to my grandchildren and not be squandered on keeping me alive. I have put almost all my assets into trusts, available to them when they reach the age of thirty.

2) It is quite clear that even the United States, the richest country in the world, cannot go on to increase the cost of Medicare or Medicaid indefinitely. I believe that a voluntary triage system should be created, whereby the available funds first go to expecting mothers, whether they have insurance or not, and then to keep old people alive. I chose to be the first volunteer in this system, deciding to end my life earlier in the hope that some fetus will get the proper care to become a healthy baby.

I wonder whether Professor McHugh will still diagnose me as suffering from depression.

HANS MEISSNER
Leonia, New Jersey

Paul McHugh offers many creditable insights into what is appalling about Dr. Jack Kevorkian's ghoulish work. Another concern, however, that is a subtext in McHugh's observations deserves emphasis.

In its best and noblest form, the physician's work is predicated upon a therapeutic alliance with a patient. This safe and confidential relationship, a cornerstone of Western medicine, emphasized by Aristotle and Hippocrates, is cul-

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tivated through years of caring for a patient, across many clinical encounters. It honors human complexity and recognizes, as McHugh notes, that life and disease are processes. A patient is a text far too subtle to be adequately interpreted upon one or two readings. In somewhat balder terms, what a patient initially asks of a doctor may not be in the patient's best interests—indeed, it may not even be what the patient truly wants.

What makes Kevorkian's work peculiarly macabre—and part of the reason for the judicial censure it prompts—is its hubristic disregard of therapeutic alliances. Kevorkian, a pathologist, has never been a clinician. He does not care for patients. He takes no long view of them. His "mercy killings" are suicide-by-proxy of despairing people with whom he is barely acquainted.

McHugh deserves praise for emphasizing that the people killed by Kevorkian are largely afflicted with serious clinical depression. In most cases, the urge to suicide reflects an emotional disorder. In rare cases, however, I suspect that unrelenting pain, with few prospects for existence without either agony or a clouded sensorium, leads patients rationally to want an end to their lives, and that those patients are discreetly assisted in hastening imminent death by well-intended, competent, caring doctors who have known them for many years. Though I have mixed feelings about such clinical scenarios, I cannot easily condemn them.

Kevorkian's reckless "medicide," however, usurps nearly every ethical principle of clinical practice. It is heartrending that a hopeless patient's terminal event could be a purposeful shove into the grave by an unbalanced, professional pariah whom that patient has just met.

MARK SWAIM, M.D.
Durham, North Carolina

Paul R. McHugh was courageous to write an article against scheduled "suicide" and euthanasia. Euthanasia's prevalence has been declared so "inevitable" and its support so nearly "unanimous" that few people (especially those among the "mainstream educated") currently dare express opposition to it. We are constantly bombarded with voices who push euthanasia with: "Don't argue, support it!" And do not psychologists/psychiatrists have a higher-than-average tendency to consider "liberal" family/life values an obligation?

However, most victims of this new turn in progressive thinking will not be the very few people who, on their own initiative, "repeatedly ask to die." Soon, barring a drastic shake-up of our society, a majority of non-sudden human deaths will be in some way hastened, and many of the victims would really have wanted to live longer. We are told so much that "nobody" in certain uncomfortable terminal medical circumstances wants to stay alive, that people in those circumstances who do want to stay alive dare not admit it. If they do admit it, they are considered "irrational," and word of their desire to live is suppressed.

Many doctors who are for physician-assisted suicide are supported by powerful forces who see the lives of others in purely utilitarian terms. Euthanasia has for decades been one element of their program. They de-emphasized it for a while after World War II because of its association with Naziism.

An especially valuable original aspect of Dr. McHugh's article is his analogy of physician-assisted suicide to Jonestown. There is evidence that even many of the Jonestown adults who dutifully drank the strawberry cyanide really wanted to live. Someday, who knows, we will all have been drilled to believe that to stay alive is "shameful" and that to die as early as possible is our *duty*.

JEANETTE DIANE WOLFBERG
Mount Kisco, New York

PAUL R. MCHUGH replies: I thank the correspondents for their attention to my essay and for the opportunity to underscore an aspect of my argument that offers a means to continue our conversation.

I hold that a convergence of interacting psycho-social factors embracing host, agent, and environment best explains the clustering of premature deaths in Michigan. This explanation grasps how vulnerable people (disturbed by a variety of illnesses) in an unprotective climate (Michigan's social and judicial environment) are lured to death by a provocative agent (Dr. Kevorkian).

Host-agent-environment is the conceptual triad first employed in studying infectious epidemics. The concept specifies each factor but also emphasizes that the convergence and interaction among the factors strengthens each of them synergistically. For example, an "environment" of poor nutrition and public hygiene weakens the physical resistance of human "hosts" and simultaneously provides sustenance and portals of entry for bacterial "agents" that strike and kill the most susceptible. The factors of host-agent-environment thus amplify one another's epidemic force. These conceptions explained the intermittent outbreaks of cholera and plague; and they encouraged efforts at controlling such epidemics long before the bacilli causing them were identified. The conception also makes sense of "The Kevorkian Epidemic" and the momentum it has

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acquired. My answers to the correspondents' arguments rest on re-emphasizing this idea.

The arguments typically pick on one of the factors rather than on their convergence and synergistic interplay. Thus, in relation to the patients, sick with many different painful illnesses, surely, says Dr. Gross, among their number are some with reasonable suicidal attitudes. I respond: suicidal patients have many different attitudes—some derived from their illnesses, some derived from their social and cultural environments, and some derived from their own reflections of the future they fear—but all make them prey of Dr. Kevorkian, even as all turn out to be attitudes that psychiatrists treat every day.

Dr. Gross and I can agree that many patients express a wish for death many times in the course of illnesses—not just terminal illnesses I might add. Where we disagree is what to make of this fact.

If we prescind—as he wishes—from the issue of depression, which provokes most death requests, we are left to decide about the source of the others. How many are owed to continuing painful symptoms, which could be satisfactorily treated? How many to anxieties that could be relieved by a knowledgeable physician supplying information and appropriate support? How many to the belief that one is burdening one's friends? How many are cries for help, in the most desperate terms a patient can muster, which can be aptly answered with pain-relieving, life-supporting plans?

I have seen every one of these situations and differ from Dr. Gross by holding that these are "good and valid" reasons, not for suicide, but for greater efforts from physicians. Dr. Gross, like many advocates of physician-assisted suicide, presumes the existence of rational suicides among the sick, but since he provides no better evidence than presumption, he may simply be strengthening the suicide-promoting psycho-social environment in which patients are embedded.

As to the termination of life supports at the request of patients, no one is denying the physically ill the right to cease being a patient at any time and thus to stop any or all of the treatments that a doctor is providing. Nelson Butters did just that. Doctors are first teachers, not technicians, and they can, should, and do explain what is gained—if anything—by the treatments they provide. Anyone can refuse or interrupt chemotherapy, oxygen therapy, dialysis, even surgery if he or she so chooses.

I believe that the inability to see the distinction between a doctor and a patient agreeing to cease an effort and a doctor using his or her skills to kill a patient whose faculties are enfeebled by illness is a startling form of moral blindness. The difference is that between surrender and betrayal. Not a hard distinction to make in other circumstances.

Dr. Gross believes that Dr. Butters received resources not available to ordinary people with Lou Gehrig's disease. Dr. Butters was a fine man, with a fine family, and he had physicians whom I salute. However, this excellent care is what Dr. Gross and I want to see made available to everyone. I cannot see how—particularly in this era of managed (i.e., ruthlessly rationed) medical care—physician-assisted suicide will facilitate it.

Finally, Dr. Gross did not read my essay as closely as I might hope. I thought it clear that the diagnosis of an "overvalued idea" does not rest on the content of the idea but rather on how it takes total possession of its holder. The diagnosis rests on a fanaticism partly demonstrated by such actions as the murder of innocents and the dismissal of democratic due process. John Brown, Carry Nation, Adolf Hitler, and Jack Kevorkian all had overvalued ideas by these criteria—a diagnosis unaffected by our agreement that slavery is an abomination and alcohol consumption should be temperate. These individuals burn with a ruling—indeed overruling—passion. No society can permit them to act out of control if it wishes to sustain the processes of justice even as it debates new ideas and practices.

Mr. Tutoli claims to know what the lives of sick people are like—one of "dependency and helplessness." He proposes that "the integrated person demands a life of integrity." As in its more familiar form—"Whose life is it anyway?"—we are dealing with an argument based on a talismanic expression that presumes self-evidence. Of course, a life of integrity is what we all try to achieve. But such a life is based on considerations in which the moral issues of personal rights and justice to others are enmeshed. Such a life always includes sacrifice—not having everything you want—and this often leads to the recognition that dignity is the most expendable of satisfactions when life itself—for ourselves and others—is at stake.

Dr. Meissner fittingly embeds his talk of rights within a concern for his community. I wonder why he thinks anything I wrote challenges his advance directives to his doctors. I stated that some conversation between doctor and patient, as to which burdens a patient will accept in the course of treatment, is crucial and customary. My only concern is that he implies that keeping money available for heirs should be a vital consideration in treatment plans for elderly people. This leads inevitably to the view that money is the measure of human lives. The very existence of Dr. Meissner—evident in the feisty qualities of interest and concern expressed in his letter—enriches all of us who interact with him. Long

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may he live—a sentiment I'm sure his heirs gladly endorse.

I am grateful to Dr. Swaim for his thoughtful letter. Our conversation could, I'm sure, be extended. Note his emphasis on "mixed feelings" over doctors hastening death. It is just such mixed feelings that emerge in most of us when faced with awful responsibilities. Physicians such as Dr. Swaim, who emphasize those inner doubts and feelings dismissed by the coarse sentiments of Dr. Kevorkian and his supporters, will ultimately be the agents of better care for dying patients.

Ms. Wolfberg identifies the environmental factor of this epidemic. This is the portion of the host-agent-environment triad that is most easily overlooked because it is "the water we swim in." A way of life with its standard behaviors and attitudes is a most surreptitious, refractory, but influential factor in any epidemic. People hate to change these familiar, habit-laden, socially sanctioned environments.

Doctors are familiar with this resistance. They remember the professional and academic ostracism of the Viennese obstetrician Ignaz Semmelweis in 1848. He discerned that obstetricians were bringing infection to their patients as they moved from bed to bed examining the women on the delivery floor. By—believe it or not—just insisting that doctors wash their hands in disinfectant before examining each woman, Dr. Semmelweis interrupted the recurrent cruel epidemics of childbed fever that killed many young mothers. His efforts at improving doctors' hygienic practices were repaid by his colleagues with obstruction and disdain until the results dramatically overwhelmed them.

Ms. Wolfberg correctly senses that if physician-assisted suicide becomes legal, then the "feel" of the environment surrounding the sick shall insidiously change. Instead of kindness and support, study and response, encouragement and sympathy for diverse ways of life, right up to the end of life, an atmosphere of uninterest in the chronically ill will emerge. Depressed and demoralized patients will receive less attention, and doctors and the public alike will subtly encourage them to see premature death as a blessing. Any resistance from patients will dwindle because the synergistic power of host-agent-environment shall have done its malignant work on them. One can make such predictions quite confidently because they describe the environment enveloping the sick in the Netherlands today.

What's in It for the Talent?

In "What's in It for the Talent?" (THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Winter 1997), Aristides adduces Shaw's vegetarianism, along with his vanity and his desire to reform English spelling, as evidence of the madness that adheres to genius. "Imagine what the SOB would have been like had he eaten meat?" asks Aristides, who does not stay for an answer: Distended, dyspeptic, and disinclined to exercise the sinews of conscience. "There is no love sincerer than the love of food," declared Shaw, and he should not be faulted for shunning carnal love.

STEVEN G. KELLMAN
Department of Comparative Literature
University of Texas, San Antonio

The River and the Road

I agree with Clara Claiborne Park ("The River and the Road: Fashions in Forgiveness," THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Winter 1997) that "we may need to remind ourselves of the power of [Kipling's] imperial ideal." India and Pakistan are far ahead of their neighbors today in large measure due to the language and habits of thought brought to them by British civil servants and soldiers.

Professor Park writes that Kipling has been unforgiven "for three generations" for "The White Man's Burden" (the title of an 1899 poem noting the United States' annexation of the Philippines). As citizens of a republic since 1946, now having seen the U.S. Navy sail off into the sunrise, I suspect that even the Filipinos are ready to forgive Kipling.

And yes, "time has brought round even some of Kipling's views that seemed most obsolete." The brutal Chinese army kills and tortures "other lamas" and "no nation, imperial or otherwise, comes to their defense." America, spoiled child of the Western world, prefers to kowtow to the butchers of Beijing, and to gaze at its navel.

A durable 1919 Kipling poem, "The Gods of the Copybook Headings," now sadly neglected, would be a breath of fresh air at our colleges, including the war colleges.

ROBERT FAIRCHILD
Hampton, Virginia

Clara Claiborne Park begins her splendid essay "The River and the Road" on the wrong foot by pointing out that while Lionel Trilling discussed both *Kim* and *Huckleberry Finn* in separate articles, "no interior references united them." That is true, but she is unaware that in 1951 he wrote an influential article for *The Reporter* about the differences between American and English literature; and he cited both novels to exemplify

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them, pointing out that *Kim* "derives something of its inspiration" from *Huckleberry Finn.*

Moreover, Trilling saw clearly her point that unlike Huck on his solitary river, "Kim swims in society." Trilling noted that with Kim "the discovery of his ancestry is his destiny, while Huck, when eventually he hears of his brutal father's death, feels scarcely any other emotion than relief at his greater safety in his isolate freedom." Trilling's grand conclusion was that "at every point the English book says that initiation into society is possible, fascinating, and desirable, while at every point the American book says that virtue lies in alienation from society. And over the century and a half during which there has been an American literature, this difference from British literature may be observed."

I was so struck by Trilling's essay when I was a graduate student at Harvard that I wrote him a letter about it, because my honors thesis at Williams College, "A Literature of Lonely People," had taken its title from a remark of W. H. Auden in one of his notes to *New Year Letter,* declaring that "most American books might well start like *Moby Dick,* 'Call me Ishmael.'" Trilling's distinction between the two national literatures was kin to Tocqueville's prophecy that among a democratic people, instead of the "legends or the memorials of old traditions," the chief theme of literary art would be "man himself taken aloof from his country and his age and standing in the presence of Nature and of God."

By 1986, however, I would argue in *New Literary History* that this dominant vision of American literature among our literary critics, as it developed after Trilling's persuasive discussion of *Kim* and *Huckleberry Finn,* tended unjustly to accuse American classic novelists of lacking a sense of history, society, and culture. These critics forgot that symbolism could be for our classic writers (as it was) "a method for exploring historical and cultural issues rather than for transcending them." I wish I had been able at that time to cite Clara Claiborne Park's essay as eloquent and penetrating proof of my point.

CUSHING STROUT
Ernest I. White Professor Emeritus of American Studies and Humane Letters
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Is That All There Is?

Although but a moderate admirer of Kingsley Amis, I feel that he and his biographer Eric Jacobs deserve better than the rancorous "Is That All There Is?" by Richard Jones in your Autumn 1996 issue. Mr. Jones leaves us and possibly himself in the dark about the origin of his resentment.

Incidentally he writes of "Philip Larkin's longtime friend and ipso facto wife." I guess he means de facto wife! It's all right to have no Latin but not all right to pretend. How can a magazine called THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR let such a howler pass?

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG
New York, New York

RICHARD JONES replies: The book by Eric Jacobs is about Kingsley Amis's life and makes no attempt to assess the writings. Thus the reader is exposed for a great number of pages to the resentments, vexatious behavior, drinking habits, and bullying of a man who, as someone said, turned the sneer into an art form. It is hardly surprising that anyone writing about him should pick up, if only by osmosis, some rancour, some sharpness of tone. Mr. van den Haag is entitled to ask: Then why bother reading about him? This, I confess, is because I have been fascinated by Amis's awfulness for many years and can still not understand how he was never slapped down by those he insulted and abused. I am especially outraged that Amis became a trustee of the Dylan Thomas estate and used every opportunity to denigrate the life and works of a man whose writings are of far greater significance than anything Amis wrote. I have never understood why Amis wished to remain a trustee when his hatred of Thomas and Thomas's poetry extended to his widow and his children. A case could also be made for the thesis that Amis helped to nullify Larkin's poetic career—not by sneering at him or telling tales out of school but by turning every accepted concept of what we loosely call the good, the beautiful, and the true into an adolescent joke.

Finally, Mr. van den Haag seems to think that because I, on this occasion, misused a Latin tag I am some sort of classicist. Nothing could be further from the truth: I am merely an inadequate copyist of my own longhand. Mr. van den Haag will be pleased to know a British high court judge, only recently, called for what he called the "traditional trappings" of the law (including Latin tags and legalese) to be scrapped and appealed for the greater use of plain English. I agree with him wholeheartedly and even though I know how to say "I'm sorry about my mistake" or mutter, in genteel cockney, "Yeh, guv, was me wot done it!" I shall put on a contrite expression and intone "Mea Culpa" in order to tease Mr. van den Haag!

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